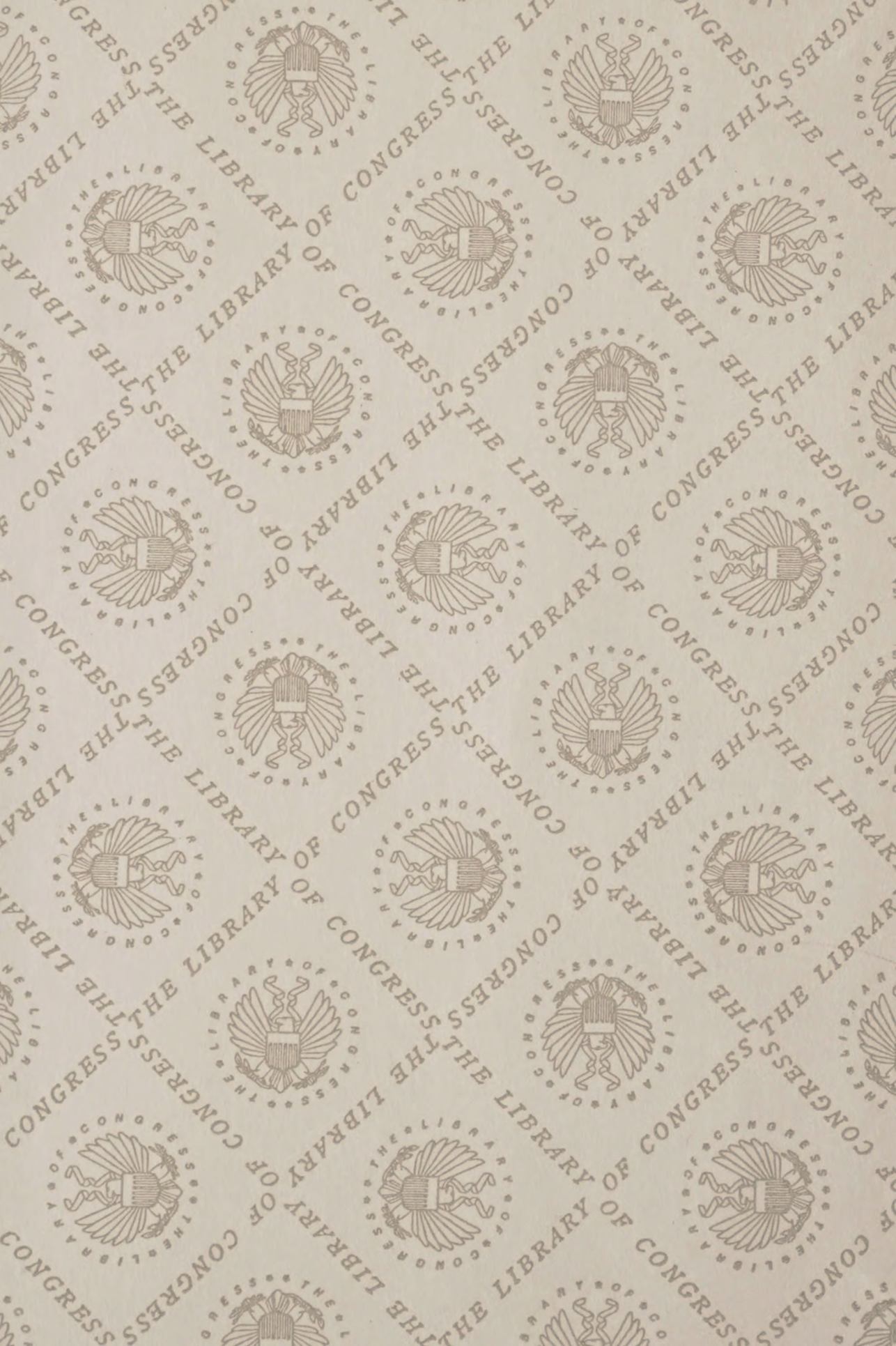






GHOST OF ROSALYS

A Play. *By* CHARLES
LEONARD MOORE



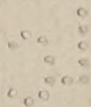
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TIMES PRINTING HOUSE
PHILADELPHIA

GHOST OF ROSALYS

PERSONS

JOYEUX VIVRIERES

AURILLAC LIONNE, MARQUIS de ISÈRE

RAOUL FLORIAN D'ESTRÉES

PIERRE HÉRODE

DOCTOR DAMARON

RESTIF ROUBAIX

HUON GUÉRET

PÈRE AMYOT

GUILLEMARD

PORTER

COOK

BOY

ROSALYS VIVRIERES

MADELON GOBRÉ

MOTHER GOBRÉ

LUCIFER

ANGEL

SERVANTS, GYPSEYS, ETC.

SCENE: THE CHÂTEAU de ISÈRE

ACT I.

Great Hall of the Chateau. The floor is strown with a disorder of green decorations burned out torches are in the sconces. At the rear, the doorway to the porch. A porter is asleep before it. Enter Guillemard.

GUILLEMARD.

Swine with a snout get up!

PORTER.

Ugh! Ugh!

GUILLEMARD.

Sure our lease to the Devil is due.
What! do you grunt and snore and turn?
Your house is afire and your wife will burn.
In your ear—Ho, there! D'ye hear?

PORTER.

Who calls?

GUILLEMARD.

Up! There is work to do. The halls,
Like the forest floor in a Winter's blow,
Are littered with greens. The burned flambeaux
Blacken the sconces. The tables yet
Are cluttered with furnishings upset.
After revel there must be rule.

PORTER.

O, 'tis you, Master Steward.

GUILLEMARD.

Aye, lazy fool!

PORTER.

No hard words, master. I dreamed of you now.

GUILLEMARD.

Aye! you see what luxuries I allow.

PORTER.

I dreamed you paid me my six months' wage
And I stuffed and stuffed as I hain't for an age.

GUILLEMARD.

Glutton!

PORTER.

Look you, my vest's a bag!

GUILLEMARD.

Ingrate!

PORTER.

See! I've the shanks of a stag!

GUILLEMARD.

The better they can in obeisance curve
To the noble Lord and Lady you serve.

PORTER.

I am hungry!

GUILLEMARD.

Wolf!

PORTER.

A wolf can bite!

GUILLEMARD.

Threats! Then I'll cuff.

PORTER.

You are liberal, quite.

GUILLEMARD.

No words. To the kitchen. Bring water here
And scrub the floor and make all clear.

Go! *(Exit Porter.)*

The rats begin to skulk from the ship;
And Sieur Joyeux—has he given the slip?
My tongue be blistered for such a doubt—
He's the King of Lords and will bear us out,
Will carry us through without a scathe,
If we can but live awhile on faith.

(A loud knock at the door.)

Is the siege begun? I'll see who knocks,
By your leave, ere I turn the key of our locks.

(Looks through a casement.)

'Tis our Lady's cousin, the Marquis Isere.
Succor and not assault is here.

(Opens the door and bows low as the Marquis de Isere enters.)

ISERE.

Guillemard!

GUILLEMARD.

My lord!

ISERE.

Sieur Joyeux is from home?

GUILLEMARD.

Yes!

ISERE.

Is your mistress from her chamber come?

GUILLEMARD.

Not yet. You know the banquet lasted late.
She waited 'till all guests had left our gate.

ISERE.

The banquet! Aye I stayed not to the end.
Now what's to do? A word with you, my friend!

GUILLEMARD.

With me, Sir?

ISERE.

Yes! I think it is a case
To break conventions.

GUILLEMARD.

O, respect my place!
Then—I have much to do—Last night's carouse—

ISERE.

You are an honest servant of our house.

GUILLEMARD.

From your grandfather's time.

ISERE.

That's much! I see
Something is wrong here. Best confide in me.

GUILLEMARD.

No! I assure you. Wrong! Indeed you err.

(Answering an imaginary call.)

O, aye, I come! We are in tumult, sir
Your pardon. This and that way, 'till I'm mad
I'm called. And servants hourly grow more bad.
O here's the Doctor. He will serve your grace.

Enter Doctor Damaron.

Forgive me gentlemen. I must hence a space.

(Exit Guillemard.)

DOCTOR.

Marquis Isere.

ISERE.

My good friend Damaron—

DOCTOR.

Our threshold late your footing scarce has known.

ISERE.

I came last night, invited—Something here
Troubled me. I returned to make it clear.

DOCTOR.

Yes, yes!

ISERE.

In all our secrets you are deep.
Doctor, what mystery does this household keep?

DOCTOR.

Alas, I know but little. Something guess.
Might mar by meddling.

ISERE.

By holding off, no less
My cousin's match and sudden marriage knot—
Begun, done in one day, and on one spot—
With Joyeux Vivrieres I not approved.
He's of the South—a hundred leagues removed.
Adventurer perhaps—a dreamer sure.
He's like a sunset shadow on the moor,
With dancing head a furlong from his heels.
The same blood in him that the firm earth feels
Nourishes not his brain. Is he away?

DOCTOR.

Some fortnight past.

ISERE.

And on what errand, say?

DOCTOR.

That no one knows.

ISERE.

As guardian of our house
I fear our honor's threatened. I must rouse:
Ghosts of the dead speak to me from these walls:
Our reliques call me—our past glory calls.
Too long in civil enmity of mood
Visiting not, unvisited, my own blood
Has foreign grown to me. But rumor now
Whispers of ruin. In the field, the plow
Rusts, and the woods grow rank. How does it stand?
The land owns us and not we own the land.
We nobles, by our birth are pledged to leave
Earth bettered—and so pay what we receive.

DOCTOR.

The estates, I fear, something neglected are.

ISERE.

Neglected! and indoors a revel law!
That gathering last night of odds and ends!
People I knew not, mixed with oldest friends!
And all the entertainment just as strange,
Famine and feast, mingled in merry change,
Viands unknown, masked 'neath familiar names,
Wines that laughed sour at ancestral claims,
Pine torches for wax lights on every hand,

And for the dance a ruffian gypsy band—
What does it mean?

DOCTOR.

Ruin—and sudden, sir—
But you're unjust to Joyeux's character.
Bit by the Universe and nobly mad—
With flaming stars within, but outward, sad—
In study, with the three friends of his heart,
Of philosophic, necromantic art,
He spends his time, nor thinks of meaner things.
His furnace smokes; his press gives wisdom wings—
Poet creator of a novel world,
Wait 'till the buds he waters are unfurled!
The future is the region that he farms.

ISERE.

The present is the region that he harms—
Down on his knees to ideal goddesses
He lets his wife go by him like the breeze.
She looked a ghost last night—I've seen her show
Like Spring's self in a blossomed copse aglow.
Why does she urge on dance and revel?—I
Make nothing of her husband's mystery,
But she has grown a secret thing indeed.

DOCTOR.

Well, a blank paper is as hard to read
As the worst hieroglyphic Egypt carved—
She's jealous of her husband's strides—starved
For love-words and caresses. So she dances,
But for distraction—Rides to the hunt and glances
Now here, now there. Wears herself out—then, sick,
With dresses, jewels, every toilet trick
Renews herself to draw her dreaming lord.
She the light craves and he turns shadowward.

ISERE.

Well, sir, I see we praise our favorite wights
Like the two genii of the Arabian Nights—
You say that she—that Rosalys is sick—
Spoke you in sober truth or rhetoric?

DOCTOR.

Sober enough! She is half spirit—and
In your ear—with child—Now you may understand
Her feverish longings.

ISERE.

Death! 'tis infamous.
Must we stand by and see her perish thus.

DOCTOR.

Sir, it is marriage! If flax and fire combine
Both vanish.

ISERE.

Is Joyeux deep in difficulties?

DOCTOR.

Drowned
I fear. But hark! what is that quarrel sound?
Our steward's woes! Sir, this embrasure seek
And you may hear that which I would not speak.

*They withdraw and enter Guillemard retreating backward.
Before him the Cook waves a spit in one hand and a great paper
in the other. Behind the Cook is a motley rabble of servants,
maids, gypsies, &c.*

GUILLEMARD.

Back all! Down dogs!

COOK.

Nay, you must hear—

BUTLER.

Aye dogs, give tongue.

HUNTSMAN.

Or bite.

PORTER.

We starve!

A GIRL.

We are in rags!

FOOTMAN.

Unpaid!

BUTLER.

Yet feasts are your delight—

GUILLEMARD.

I pray be calm!

GYPSEY.

Sir, see you pay my comrades their demand,
Or your white ruffled throat may feel another kind of band.

GUILLEMARD.

Do you revolt, too, girls?

A GIRL.

Yes, faith! Of many lords we tire.
There's that great musty owl, Roubaix, by his undying
fire—

ANOTHER GIRL.

And worse than him, that toad Gueret, with venom and
with sting—
Who gives a thing and takes a thing and steals the Devil's
ring.

ANOTHER GIRL.

O, sir, Sieur Raoul!

GUILLEMARD.

Well, what of him?

GIRL.

He's prom—he's promised, sir,
To marry me—and now I find he's promised her—and her—

GUILLEMARD.

These are Sieur Joyeux' friends. Come! speak the injuries
of the Hall.
You, Chef, are eloquent! Stand forth and voice the woes
of all.

COOK.

I can speak best in *entremets*, in sauces or in paste.

My art that Paris knows and loves soars o'er your country
taste.

Have I not been inspired in tarts—divinely rapt in creams?
Have I not wrought in sugar work beyond a poet's
dreams?—

But now no more—bricks without straw—I must decline
to make.

Mirande Joli du Vair resigns—be pleased the letter take.

GUILLEMARD.

Nay, be resigned. Our House's fame, pray, sir, consider
that;

Our honor which you built so high, wilt leave it to fall flat?

COOK.

Your honor! What is that to me. I must consider mine:
Without material must fail the loftiest design.

My Lady's whims I did not mind—ever I met her wish
And wrought with twenty substitutes a still sufficient
dish—

But last night's feast—that crowned my cup of all indig-
nities.

The fish—plain carp—that had to serve for salmon of the
seas—

And ducks that from the village pond my scullion foraged
forth

My art set forth as ptarmigan or peasants of the North—

But the whole roasted boar! Know you, who did present
that part?

GUILLEMARD.

Not I!

COOK.

'Twas our great Newfoundland, a martyr to my art.
I can't go on—Besides!—

GUILLEMARD.

What else?

COOK.

These hungry, scurrilous ones,
They say that I keep round and plump while they are
skeletons;
And so with darkest looks they hint I'm fittest for their
need—
The legend of Medusa's raft they would again o'er read.
So I withdraw.

GUILLEMARD.

One week remain!

COOK.

I go!

GUILLEMARD.

Desert not thus!

GROOM.

And I, too, leave. My horses starve!

HUNTSMAN.

My dogs are ravenous!

FOOTMAN.

Let's all go in a pack.

GYPSEY.

Nay, fools! Wilt go with empty hands?

There's wealth enough within this house to glut a dozen bands.

GROOM.

We'll take our dues!

HUNTSMAN.

Aye, that's the word!

BUTLER.

The plate, the plate is mine!

HUNTSMAN.

The arms I claim.

GROOM.

The trophies, I, and every hunting cup—

GYPSEY.

Scatter and plunder while you may.

HUNTSMAN.

Away! the game is up.

GUILLEMARD.

Hold!

HUNTSMAN.

Peace and be saved.

GUILLEMARD.

Yet stay!

GROOM.

Old man!

GUILLEMARD.

I only beg a word!

GYPSEY.

Let's fire the Chateau when all's done.

COOK.

Yet should he not be heard—

GUILLEMARD.

Hold but your hands one day my friends. A day is all I ask.
Sieur Joyeux comes—I know he comes—and then you all
will bask

Under the sunny gleam of gold—What! Would you dare
the law?

Better to tighten in your belts than feel the halter draw.
Steal, burn and ruin—and then what? Be outcast fugitives.
The moment act is not the end but through the future lives.
Beware! Be calm—Back to your posts—Our luck will
change. The sun

Comes riding back with Sieur Joyeux and the long night is
done.

BUTLER.

'Twere best to wait!

FOOTMAN.

Aye, he says true. To rob's a risky thing!

GROOM.

A day is but a day!

GYPSEY.

I'm off. Your chance is on the wing.—(Exit.)

COOK.

We wait on you.

BUTLER.

Our service, sir.

FOOTMAN.

Please you that we withdraw.

(They crowd tumultuously out.)

GUILLEMARD.

O Lord! They're gone. We're saved—and yet—to-morrow
—Ruin—War!

(Isere and the Doctor come forward.)

ISERE.

So, my friend, there is nothing wrong,
Will you change the burden of your song?

GUILLEMARD.

What! have you overheard?

ISERE.

Yes, all!

GUILLEMARD.

And seen?—

ISERE.

The Revolution of the Hall.

GUILLEMARD.

Vouch then, I've nothing left untried
To save our honor and our pride.

ISERE.

Think you Joyeux returns to-morrow?

GUILLEMARD.

He must or there's a worser sorrow.

(A quiet knock is heard at the door.)

Our Lady, help us! All hope is fled
The vulture swoops upon the dead.

ISERE.

Why, how now, Guillemard?

DOCTOR.

Death, he's pale!
Chatter his teeth and his knees fail.
What is it man?

GUILLEMARD.

The door! the door!

ISERE.

Well, open and we will be four.

GUILLEMARD.

Bid me not open. I dare not! No!
On the threshold stands our Overthrow.

ISERE.

Let it come, though an earthquake just unleashed,
Or the Revelation's roaring Beast.

DOCTOR.

Death nor the devil shall me daunt.
Rethro Sathanas! Sin avaunt!

(Opens the door and enter Pierre Herode.)

HERODE.

O sir, you honor me. 'Tis I
Should wait on you. I do not lie—
I am your humble servant, and
May I salute you? Well, your hand!
How proud indeed I am to greet
A man so learned and discreet—
And here's my master Guillemard—O
How well, how plump, how proud you grow.
I am your slave. Come, one embrace!
I swear I love your honest face.
And what! The Marquis de Isere!
No! Yes! O sir, I bow in fear.

ISERE.

These are words, sans compliment,
Say to whom your visit's meant.

HERODE.

My errand is to Sieur Joyeux.

ISERE.

He is from home.

HERODE.

Ah, is it so—

But his Steward answers here for him.

GUILLEMARD.

I, not at all!

HERODE.

Why, what strange whim.

Unlucky! 'Tis the day! He knew!

ISERE.

What sir?

HERODE.

Some bills—mere trifles—due!

ISERE.

And if he meets them not?

HERODE.

Why then—

Trouble. It is the lot of men.

I shall be forced to enter here

Upon my property.

ISERE.

Make clear
How Joyeux in your debt does stand.

HERODE.

Willingly! I must make demand
Ere process falls.

(Draws forth a large pocket book.)

Primus—I quote

For sixty thousand crowns, a note
At twelve per centum—thrice renewed—
Interest on interest accrued—
Secured by mortgage—so and so—
On the woods and fields of Chatauraux!—

ISERE.

What could he want with such supplies?

HERODE.

That mostly went to sail the skies
In aereonautic trial to make
The universal air a lake.

ISERE.

Proceed, I see there's more to come.

HERODE.

Secundum—Mortgage for the sum
Of eighty thousand—terms the same—
Renewed at twenty-five. The claim
Is on the home lands at Isere—

ISERE.

And that was spent—

HERODE.

It would appear
A scheme to abolish poverty
And make men equal all and free
Took most of it.

ISERE.

Go on!

HERODE.

A mortgage on the grounds
And Chateau—twenty thousand pounds.

ISERE.

Shades of my sires—intolerable.
Go on! go on! no need to tell
What folly this.

HERODE.

A small supply
One hundred thousand francs—whereby
A bill of sale of household things,
Pictures, tapestries, furnishings
Here at the Chateau—

ISERE.

May the hearth gods
Whip him naked with nettle rods!
Have you said all?

HERODE.

Not quite. Of late
Some thirty thousand on the plate.
Of course such goods being moveable

The interest somewhat had to swell.

ISERE.

The total sir—the total say—

HERODE.

Here are the papers—take them—nay,
Prove them authentic. You will not. So!
The schedule does the items show
So much for principal—so much—
Interest. You see my claim will touch
Two million francs! Who pays the gear?
Well, sirs, am I not master here?

ISERE.

Thou trafficker most infamous.
Dost dare to claim thy forfeit thus?

HERODE.

These are but words. He had my cash.
Thinks't thou me so weak and rash—
To give and give and never take?—

ISERE.

But this man whom thou would'st break—
Hast thou no mercy? Pity, Love,
Honor, that all men must move
Do not these before thine eyes
Rise to rebuke thy usuries?

HERODE.

These are things I do not know!
Wine can set my blood aglow,
Food can nourish, women please,
Dress, equipage and luxuries

Get me power and pomp and place:—
But your thin abstractions, chase
Air in air—their kind is cursed—
God when he rested at the first
Saw that the world was good—so I
See that the world is good, and try
Ever to get as much of it
As I can compass by my wit.

ISERE.

How in His name did'st thou first get
Joyeux in thy golden net?

HERODE.

When a fool is born—is born
One to turn him into scorn—
Him I met and could not choose
But mark him for my proper use.
He was proud, impetuous, frank,
Confident in wealth and rank;
Knew no qualities of men,
Saw himself in them again.
Quite disdained the humble gift,
Power breeding power of thrift;
Knew not he must creep who runs,
Wanted all the world at once—
So I gave him loose at will;
Loaned him money to his fill;
Made him waxen wings to fly
In the burning heavens high;
Every brainsick phantasy,
Philosophy, philanthropy,
Helped him on—'till ruin fell,
And the end inevitable.

ISERE.

So the earthworms upward cast
Covers and conceals at last

Stately monuments and towers—
The proud Wraith of antique hours
Glides from these dishonored walls,
Dead the prostrate carcas falls.

HERODE.

Well am I not master here,
With a title proved and clear
To this house and lands?

ISERE.

Not yet!

HERODE.

How?

ISERE.

I assume and pay the debt!

HERODE.

You!

ISERE.

Dost doubt my competence?

HERODE.

Ah! I know your roll of rents
From a dozen seignories—
Tilled with truest husbandries.
Farms and villages and towns
Bear you crops of golden crowns:
Treasure doubtless you can count
Twenty times my poor amount.

ISERE.

Guillemard, take this man aside:
See his claim full satisfied.
And an order for it draw
On my Treasurer.

GUILLEMARD.

Come, Sir Claw
From our house your talons take.

HERODE.

Well, I must—though with an ache,
For my pride 'twould better fit
Lord within those halls to sit.
(They go aside to a table.)

DOCTOR.

Sir, 'tis fine—but I foretell
To Joyeux 'tis impossible.

ISERE.

O my Damaron know my heart—
Pride of race is part—but part
Only of this sudden act—
She I love in very fact—
Is another's—His the joy,
His the ore without alloy:
Yet has he wantoned all away.
He must be ruled. He shall be. Nay,
Have I not the right to save,
My blood from ruin and the grave.

DOCTOR.

Danger! Danger! Danger! Well,
I thought it was impossible.

ISERE.

Nothing for myself, I ask:
But I must assume the task
To guide, to warn, to save, to bless
And draw them both to happiness.

DOCTOR.

Sir, take me for an oracle—
And my word is—Impossible!

ISERE.

Pshaw! In your Dodona oak
A raven has been taught to croak.
Joyeux has sense—must change his course
If not to gentleness, to force—

DOCTOR.

Well have your way. And faith there is
No other road in sight but this.

GUILLEMARD.

The order, sir!

ISERE.

Hast vouched the bills?

GUILLEMARD.

Aye, though unnumbered as Troy's ills.

ISERE.—(*Signing.*)

Here is your quittance, but you lose
Your customer.

HERODE.

I have no use
For one that's bankrupt.

ISERE.

Then, I pray—
Guillemard—the door.

HERODE.

May I not pay
A premium for this favor done?

ISERE.

I understand not.

HERODE.

You've not won
The day with my defeat. I leave
Allies enough to make you grieve.
Even in my enemies' central camp
Allies I have of every stamp—
And front and flank and rear they take
And his battle lines unmake.

ISERE.

The baseness you spare not to do
Do you care to boast it too—

HERODE.

Wit that has the world to win
Values your morals not a pin—
Brains without cunning, what are they?
Beggars that I take in pay—
From the world's false presence thrust

Maugre name and maugre crust—
Poets, philosophers, dreamers, sooth
All the servitors of truth,
I have hired them for my need
And on Joyeux palmed indeed,
Such an one, and such an one,
That he might sooner be undone.

ISERE.

What, are Joyeux's friends your men?

HERODE.

All of them, always and again!
He would be magnificent,
Patron of the arts, was bent
To know the Secret of the Whole,
And give the world another soul:
What do you think me. Could I stop,
From my universal shop,
Every thought and every thing,
Theory, thinker, forth I bring.
Cuckoo eggs that I at best
Foist into Sieur Joyeux's nest.
Mine his philanthropic craze,
Mine the rebel populace,
Mine his forges ceaseless smoke,
Songs, pamphlets—and the man is broke.

ISERE.

What thy purpose? What thy end?

HERODE.

They could spend and I could lend.
One hand washed the other thus.
Ha! You look incredulous.

ISERE.

Horrible! If these things are so
Why confess them?

HERODE.

Hence I go.
Here my game is played. Elsewhere
Need I my helpers. Without care,
Send them packing. So, farewell.

ISERE.

Thou must stay to hear them tell
Of their counterfeited worth.
Guillemard bid these people forth.—(*Exit Guillemard.*)

DOCTOR.

Sit you here, as judge, and I
Will with you these cases try
Unto our assize compelled;
As the Priest and Barber held
Inquest on Don Quixote's books.

ISERE.

We must judge them by their looks,
For their contents hid will be.

HERODE.

Candor they shall learn from me.

*Enter Restif Roubaix a dishevelled figure, wild eyed and
grimed with smoke.*

ROUBAIX.

Who dares call me from my labors?

ISERE.

That do we.

ROUBAIX.

But who are you?

ISERE.

Judges met to try and sentence.

ROUBAIX.

What have I with that to do?

HERODE.

Me at least you must remember.

ROUBAIX.

You! I think—Yes I recall

You are he who brings us money. Ah, we need you—if
at all,

Now, this instant. Hist! Be secret. The great labor of
our hands

Trembles upon final issue—on the verge of triumph stands.

HERODE.

Pray what is't—An airship.

ROUBAIX.

Folly! That was in our 'prentice days—

HERODE.

A machine to run forever?

ROUBAIX.

We've abandoned childish ways.

HERODE.

What then!

ROUBAIX.

Hark you! But your friends here! Are they silent? Will
they keep
Safe the word that makes us Gods to read and rule the star-
strown deep?

HERODE.

You are blind. This is the Doctor—this the Marquis de
Isere.
Confidants could you have better?—but your secret lacks,
I fear.

ROUBAIX.

Ha! Come close around me.

ISERE.

Well, sir—

ROUBAIX.

This in not a thing of course.
Can you guess what I've discovered.

DOCTOR.

A bad smell!

ROUBAIX.

The Etheric Force!

ISERE.

Well, and what is that, sir?

ROUBAIX.

That! Dost know what keeps our central sun
Like a fiery forge pulsating power while on the Aeons run?

DOCTOR.

Final nebular condensation.

ROUBAIX.

Bah! a mere hypothesis.

Long ago its force had failed it were there nothing more
than this.

No! Etherial, watery vapors fill its path—the vasts of
space—

And from these it gathers gases while the planetary race
Other gases draw about them—opposite in kind, and so
An electric act between them springs and light and heat
and life

Flashes in the heavens forever—for that ocean space is rife
With unfailing force eternal.

ISERE.

And what then if this is sure?

ROUBAIX.

I, I sir, have an invention—'tis a sun in miniature—
That can draw from out the void a power to do the whole
world's work.

ISERE.—(*Aside.*)

Is he mad?

DOCTOR.—(*Aside.*)

O surely!

ROUBAIX.

Simple as it seems more wonders lurk,
Yet within this great discovery—Know I have dissolved
and bent
All the forms and things of nature to the Final Element!

DOCTOR.

Ha! an alchemist!

ROUBAIX.

I can make you gold and diamonds at will.

DOCTOR.

Why not make some?

ROUBAIX.

Yet, behind are greater, stranger marvels still!
Life itself is in my power—for the mould and soul of man,
In the final atom buried can be freed or can be bound.

DOCTOR.

Why man, dost thou halt and boggle? Why not do these
deeds profound?

ROUBAIX.

For the moment my invention something lacks—unfinished
stands—
Money need I to complete it—money, money with both
hands—

DOCTOR.

Well I thought so. It must lack then, for your dream is
o'er and done.
Wake! Your patron's bankrupt, ruined!

ROUBAIX.

Sieur Joyeux!

DOCTOR.

His race is run.

ROUBAIX.

What, my projects dashed—the Secret left unseized. It
must not be!
You are rich, sir—Help me! Aid me! I will give you
sovereignty
Over nature.

ISERE.

You I pity, not your folly.

ROUBAIX.

Wilt not help me?

ISERE.

Not at all!

ROUBAIX.

O the fools of life that will not listen unto science's call—
And the money Joyeux squandered—just a little of it back!

HERODE.

Use your own—I paid you fairly—every purchase had its
snack.

ROUBAIX.

O, that went in my invention.

HERODE.

Ha! the cheater believes his cheat.

ISERE.

He's sincere and that uplifts him, while you grovel at his
feet.

Enter Huon Gueret.

Give place old man, thy fellow guest is here.

GUERET.

Excellent sirs! The Marquis de Isere,
I haste to welcome your authority.

ISERE.

Thy benefactor's ruin pleases thee!

GUERET.

Guillemard has told me. Unfortunate young man!
Oft have I sought to change his path and plan.
Wrought with him late and long to leave his dreams,
His idle and impracticable schemes—
And all his rioting with Raoul D'Estrees,

His songs and wine and fortune wasting play—
Sermons and sober counsel have I given
To make him useful here and safe in heaven.

ISERE.

So I have heard—and half of his estate
Squandered to fan a mutinous people's hate.

GUERET.

Who gives unto the poor lends to the Lord.
I am a meek apostle of the Word.
I labor solely for humanity.
If I have urged upon Joyeux to free
His tenantry from need of servile work,
From tasks that gall aged shoulders and that irk
The new made angels of the mint of youth—
If I have gone about to spread the truth
By pamphlets, preaching, talk among the folk
Against wealth's tyranny and damning yoke,
I stand up for my creed—And glad will be
A martyr—though in all humility.

ISERE.

But now your master has no more to spend,
Will you be poor with him who was your friend?

GUERET.

I can go forth a beggar—verily.
But I have better hope. I turn to thee,
Aurillac Lionne, Marquis de Isere,
Take up the Cross—the Christian's banner bear—
Your eminent power and your great domain
Resign, resign and choose a mightier gain—
Give up your wealth to those that need it more,
Toil's product to the laborer restore,
Let thousands take the surplusage of one,
And common rights live 'neath the common sun;

Sow with both hands abroad—you cannot err—
And I myself will be your Almoner.

Enter Guillemard.

GUILLEMARD.

Seigneur while you talked here, I did engage,
For my suspicion of this personage,
To search his chamber. In his chest I found
This bag of gold with twenty more around.

GUERET.

My money! What you dare to search my room?
Outrage! The law shall teach you to presume.

ISERE.

Starvation in the house and you so rich!
Martyr and saint mount upward to your niche.

GUERET.

You shall not filch my hoard from me away.

ISERE.

Be calm! I prey not upon those that pray—
Doctor, our second book is for the fire.

DOCTOR.

Here comes the third and clothed in rich atire.

(Enter Raoul Florian D'Estrees.)

RAOUL.

How! Do you hold a trial to spy
In the secrets of hospitality?

ISERE.

You are a poet!

RAOUL.

You are a Lord!
Neither had voice in Fate's award.
Do you summon me here to bless or ban?

ISERE.

As one may another gentleman.

RAOUL.

Nay, your power I will not flout.
You shall have my confession out and out—
Joyeux is ruined they say. Alack!
That I had the crowns I have wasted back.
I will take my staff and will beg for him;
Like a minstrel bard in the ages dim,
From castle to cottage I'll singing go,
To serve the man who has loved me so.

ISERE.

Thou hast helped him on in his headlong course.

RAOUL.

I have lived free in this house of course,
Have lived at his charges more years than one,
Drank of his wine perhaps a tun,
Ate what his fool cook reckoned best,
Clad myself brave at Joyeux's request,
For he thought a poet's song more gay
If the poet's self kept holiday:—
These are my crimes. Like a joyous bird
I have perched on his shoulder and would be heard;

Have tuned my voice and practiced my art
To ease the gloom of his mighty heart.

DOCTOR.

With your revelry and your wanton fits
You have broken decorum all to bits.
Like Bacchus himself you dance on with laughter
And a train of sometime maids comes after.

RAOUL.

You, my Lord, are a thing of state—
Superbly stiff and superbly great:
You cannot alter or change or flinch,
Lord you must be in every inch:
And the Doctor, here, he is all one piece,
A mender of man's iniquities;
He cannot stray from his narrow marge,
He's his own prescriptions writ at large:
And our Jew—he's a beast of the jungle mart
From his crooked claws to his crooked heart:—
But a poet is twenty men at once
And his spirit flies or sits or runs:
Soaring or dancing, 'tis passionate,
And looks abroad for its fitting mate;
So it falls that no woman comes amiss,
But chimes with some mood that the poet is.

ISERE.

I did not realize what we spoke
To such a mighty bundle of folk.
Doctor, what think you of volume third?

DOCTOR.

There are good things in it. It's fate's deferred.

*A noise at the door. Then enter Pere Amyot dragging in
Mother Gobre by the wrist.*

AMYOT.

Justice!

ISERE.

What have you?

AMYOT.

A witch here, and red-handed caught in her art.

ISERE.

Her crime!

AMYOT.

In the village, just now she has cleaned from a boy's hand
a wart,
She has lifted a spell from a dry-uddered cow, so it gushed
forth a foamy flood,
She has eased the pangs of a dying sow, 'till it brought forth
a healthy brood.

ISERE.

I see nothing in that.

AMYOT.

There is worse behind—She has curdled the milk in the
tins,
She has cursed one woman with barrenness—wrought
another a vomit of pins;
And a girl has confessed who went with her to a rendezvous
of the Fiend
In the Valley of Carre when, with hideous rites her body and
soul were demeaned.

ISERE.

Well, what do you wish that we do with your witch?

AMYOT.

I rescued her late from the crowd,
From their stones and their threats and I brought her here
to be judged and her penance allowed.

ISERE.

Is there crime in such magic, my Doctor? Is there death
in her dealing and words?

DOCTOR.

Not so! She's a harmless old woman, and my rival in heal-
ing and herbs.
The sickly trances of dreaming girls and the ignorant fears
of men
Abound to her hand—She is only shrewd to know and work
with them then.

AMYOT.

Doctor! Materialist rather you are. You look but on the
surface of things.
She's been seen in places were leagues apart—where she
could not be without wings,
She has spat on the church's threshold. I have seen the
altar lights dim and go out
And a cold wind strike through the nave when she went
in the village about—
The Miller cursed her and beat her. He sickened and
wasted with strange desire—
And a witness I have to tell that she melted his waxen shape
at a fire.
Justice upon her I claim and peace for myself and my sore
stricken flock.

ISERE.

What sayest thou, woman, to this?

DOCTOR.

She speaks not!

RAOUL.

Odsfish, she's as mute as a block!

AMYOT.

She's malignant. She is armed by her master and against adjuration is proof.

ISERE.

Come! Loosen your tongue, I bid you! Make answer!

DOCTOR.

She holds like a storm aloof—

ISERE.

Beware! I have powers to hurt you. I can have you flung
in a pond;
Or dragged at the tail of a cart—or whipped 'till you faint
and beyond.

AMYOT.

No Innocence ever faced men so! Is her obduracy not proof
enough?

DOCTOR.

But have you nothing really against her but her charms and
such gossip and stuff?

AMYOT.

Aye! She has a daughter, just budded, a girl who is scarce
seventeen,
Who wanders the woods and sleeps in the hedge, and is
growing a gypsy queen.
I would save her soul. Would baptize her and dedicate her
in the church.
But she laughs at my words when I meet her abroad and
leaves me still in the lurch.
And her mother uses her beauty, I know, to draw the hearts
of young men
To that damned haunt in the hollow woods where she has
her ominous den—
And they come back changed, they cannot forget—on that
heathenish baggage they dote—

MOTHER GOBRE.

Thou liest, foul priest!

DOCTOR.

At last she will speak!

MOTHER GOBRE.

Thou liest deep down in thy throat.
My child is as pure as the virgins that come to thy Con-
firmation feast.
The woods are her church—her altar the rocks—she needs
no blessing of priest—
She's as good as the mistress who sways this house—as
noble as Rosalys
Who has known her and loved her and sought her oft' with
sisterly talk and kiss.

ISERE.

Silence, you hag! I will have your tongue from behind
your teeth torn out

If you bring such a name and lofty fame to mix with your
deeds of doubt.

MOTHER GOBRE.

You would have one speak—and speak I will. A lady is she
whom you praise!
Will you know a woman through and through though you
live with her all your days—
She has chaffered with me for my ware and charms—for
unguents to make her fair,
Colors to redden her lips and cheeks and perfumes to scent
her hair;
I have read her palm and cast her stars and told her the
vision of truth;
I have brewed her a philter to make more sure the love that
waned with youth;
She has stood at night in my hollow wood by my magic
pool ablaze,
While I sent her soul from her body forth to follow her
husband's ways;
She has—

ISERE.

Fury and death, this passes all bounds. Her babble is sac-
rilege.
Take her, Sir Priest, and with lock and key keep her body
safe for a pledge—
That her tongue's vile words will not spread abroad.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Back all of ye craven things!
My nails are venom'd, my teeth are sharp—'tis not only my
tongue that stings—
Will ye drag me out from the house whose fate I know, and
secrets obscure—
While my Lady Saint sits on high above and gleams in her
radiance pure—
In her name condemn me! I hiss at her name—

RAOUL.—(*To the Priest.*)

You see sir, that lets you out—
She spits like a cat at a broom and forgets the hand that
wields it about.

MOTHER GOBRE.

I hate her. I hated her always. What right has she to
her graces and airs,
While we are outcast and hunted about like beasts routed
out of their lairs?
What right to her delicate food has she—to gowns, laces,
diamonds rich,
While we half-naked in cold and rain, find a home perhaps
in a ditch,
Or house in the woods in a hollow cave and gather a few,
poor sticks
For a fire to cook the hare I have snared or the fowl I have
got by my tricks?
When I go to the village all looks are cold, my benison is
a curse
And fists are shaken behind my back—I'm in luck if there's
nothing worse.
For myself I care naught, for my heart is high and Egypt's
wrinkled lore
Makes me scorn the darkness you think is light—your rules
that I triumph o'er.
I can herd with the foxes and wolves and snakes for they
and I are akin—
But my child is fair and sweet without and sweet and fair
within.
She must wander about in the storm alone or have hunger
and cold for her mates,
While my Lady sits here at ease in her hall and dines upon
delicate cates;
She must be a jibe to the village churl—to this ill-omened
priest a reproof,
While my Lady can ride abroad in state and take homage
under her roof.

ISERE.

Will no one choke her to dumbness—

RAOUL.

As well stop a mountain stream as the talk
Of a woman alone—and a woman and witch the Devil only
can balk.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Is my daughter not fair? The torch of the Dawn floats in
her and lightens her face,
Like the reddening bough of an April tree is her body for
splendor and grace.
She is meet to match with the best of all. She is fit to mate
with Joyeux;
To be mother of men and maids and to fill new hearts with
her rich, red glow—
She is wise in her dreams and her mind's swift flight can
wing abreast with his own
And their hair shall mingle, the dark and bright—o'er the
book where the future is known.
It shall be! 'Tis decreed!

ISERE.

Must I use my own hands to silence this hag and arrest?

GUILLEMARD.

Come, Sir Priest.

RAOUL.

Nay, I'll help.

DOCTOR.

Her mouth utters her doom.

AMYOT.

Seize her arms from behind, it were best.

They close round her and force her to the door. At the threshold she breaks from them.

MOTHER GOBRE.

What, so many men to one woman—I'll go—but I'll go not before

I have bitten my wrist—there is blood within—and sprinkled three drops on the floor.

Blood will follow on blood—and woe will tread fast on the heels of woe—

Hush! I've a word and a charm for you yet—you may say I have said thus and so—

After a moment's silence she chants with solemn emphasis and gesture.

The spell is on me—the veils of day

Melt at a light more bright than they.

I see the frontage of proud Isere

With its thronging turrets and spires appear—

I see it flicker and reel and fall

From topmost stone to foundation wall.

Though stair is leveled and porch is none

A phantom throng comes forth—one by one.

Shall I say who first—shall I say who last

From that faded dream of a house has past?

The Chatelaine of that lordly Hall

From her bier uprears with a trailing pall!

And look! what flutters and floats by her side?

'Tis her unborn babe that not even died!

And the Father and Lord—is it he comes now

With dabbled hands and a pallid brow?

And that lofty figure with death damp wet

And the wood ooze upon his garments yet

And the wound in his breast. 'Tis he! 'Tis he!

Friend, Rival and Witch Judge—Ha! Ha!—all three—

There are more! There are more!

But the shadows draw—

I am dizzy! I fall!
What faces are these around me all?
Ah! A rat! I'll come anon—
Good day—I am gone.

She whirls round and disappears through the door. They stare stupidly at each other for a moment.

ISERE.

Is it over?

RAOUL.

Was there a flash of lightning?

DOCTOR.

No!
These beings are elemental and they show
To our mixed natures, laboring and late,
Vivid and single in their love and hate.

Enter Rosalys Vivrieres.

GUILLEMARD.

Behold! Our Lady!

ISERE.

Madam! Rosalys!

ROSALYS.

Cousin, you shall have both my hands for this—
'Tis kind of you to come to us so soon—

ISERE.

What can the tide but wait upon the moon?

ROSALYS.

I am not light, sir—Doctor, loyal friends!

RAOUL.

The exile of our tribe of songsters ends—
Right in the front of Winter rises Spring!

DOCTOR.

Madam, I hope that you are well!

GUERET.

I bring
And lay a world of homage at your feet!

AMYOT.

I my fair Saint and daughter gladly greet.

HERODE.

Last and the least I bow before you, too—
One would do everything these Gentiles do.

ROSALYS.

What Pierre Herode and at this moment—good!
You bring us Paris news to stir our blood—
And fashions, fashions, fashions! I can guess
You fetch me my late ordered hunting dress,
And by new chain of pearls. Nay do not speak!
Speak none of you! Let us be antique, Greek;—
A woodland masquerade—that is my will!

GUILLEMARD.

A Fete!

ROSALYS.

In the afternoon, or better still
Under the hanging lamp of the full moon,
On the terrace by the lake—and soon, O soon!
A Dian's hunting party! I will get
Julie de Neuville—Nomenoe, Yvette,
Your sister, cousin, and others to present
The clear wood rangers from the firmament.
As for you gentlemen—You may profess
To be Satyrs, wood gods, every ugliness—
Quick Master Herode to Paris send on wings
For the costumes.

HERODE.

Hem!

ROSALYS.

Guillemard the needed things
Have ready for our due refrection—

GUILLEMARD.

Oh!

ROSALYS.

We will have half the province to our show—
You know friends that our husband is away
On business— nevertheless our hearts are gay—
O Guillemard, bid my architect to me!
On a rocky islet in our mimic sea
We will build a temple whose marble shafts shall seem
The real heart of all the moonlight dream;
And there my snow white maids shall trooping meet,
And in procession singing sadly sweet,
Close the rich day with holy worship in.
About the work. Come, all of you—begin—

GUILLEMARD.

Alas!

HERODE.

Aha!

ROSALYS.

Why sigh you and why laugh?
Why do you others coldly look—or half
Avert your faces. I bid you tell me sirs,
What evil may make grave such counsellors!

ISERE.

O nothing—a mere trifle.

ROSALYS.

You are far
Above commandment, but these others are
Bound to my will. Herode, resolve to me
The riddle that in all your looks I see.

DOCTOR.

Nay, I forbid it!

HERODE.

Madam, I am dumb!

ROSALYS.

Raoul, I beg you! Isere to you I come
What is it—Quick! Is Joyeux hurt, or worse!

ISERE.

Cousin, I swear not.

ROSALYS.

Why, then, so averse
To tell me of the trouble.

ISERE.

Since you will
I will unfold as far as my poor skill
Allows, the history of the case. Joyeux
Devoted something blindly, as you know
To science and to schemes of progress vast,
Has with this person dealt for some years past
For large advances. To-day the debt was due
And Joyeux absent. I, who certain knew
Your husband's honorable aim and end,
Took but the liberty of an old friend,
And paid the money. At Joyeux's return
He'll make it good and stand by me in turn.

ROSALYS.

Yor are noble, cousin. Joyeux with my consent,
Certain, it seemed, of great accomplishment,
Borrowed from Master Herode. I did not know
We were in straits. To what amount may go
Our debts?

ISERE.

About two million francs.

ROSALYS.

I think
Half what we own in that abyss must sink.

ISERE.

Why there Joyeux was rash indeed—He gave
Mortgage on everything that we must save—
But that is done—and now with management,
Curtailed expense—a life made different,
Dismissal of his hungry retinue,
Joyeux may easily at last win through—
My help is his to righten the estate—

ROSALYS.

Your courtesy like your nobleness is great.
But have you settlement with Herode made?

ISERE.

Aye, Guillemard has the papers. He is paid!

ROSALYS.

Give them me Guillemard!

GUILLEMARD.

Madam, here they are
Saved from this hungry vulture's ravening claw.

ROSALYS.

Ah, see I here the name of Chatauraux?
What must the home place of my childhood go—
The lime walks and the formal trimmed parterre,
The oaks, the very birds that builded there,
All with one pen mark blotted from my life?
And O, worse pang, my Eden as a wife,
Isere, whose every stone is memory,
Whose wild great forests are a part of me!
This loss is more than death.

ISERE.

Aye, cousin, think
What heritages such as these mean—They do link
Us with the pregnant past. Draw you themes thence
For all your wit and woman eloquence,
To win Joyeux from error. Teach him, men
May not even do good madly. Surely then
Not the wild actions of his waking dreams.

ROSALYS.

I think our future will make brief his schemes,
Without our argument. Cousin, your deeds!
I'm glad a noble gentleman succeeds
To us poor, passing tenants.

ISERE.

What do you mean?

ROSALYS.

That you scarce know him does not wholly screen
Your act mistaken. What! would you have him do
Things your proud spirit would not stoop unto?—
And me, your cousin, one of your own blood.—
Do you think that stream in me an errant flood,
To turn from honor?

ISERE.

You do not understand!

ROSALYS.

We take no gifts, dear friend, from any hand!

ISERE.

If you refuse what will you do? Where go?

ROSALYS.

Anywhere! God, the world is wide enow!
What does it matter if we starve in rags
So our proud brows untarnished keep the flags
Of honor flying. You think me weak and frail;
See if I will in aught my husband fail.
Do you know what wifhood means? It is to be
A servant mistress. To strive for mastery
Only for kindness. While joy lasts to caress,
Make breathless with expected happiness,
Vex, torment, be ten thousand things at once,
So that he tire not. But when Joy's sand runs
And Sorrow turns the hour glass, then indeed
To be the perfect partner of his need,
To keep no separate self count—but to toss
All, all your being to make up his loss—
To go forth with one Faith unto one Fate—
Nor look back at the Angel at the gate:
To sin together, to be together sent
Out of your Eden into banishment!

ISERE.

Here is no place for me. You have words that kill
Worse than can swords. Pierre Herode do you still
Prefer your bonds to a quittance?

HERODE.

Yes, much more!

ISERE.

Then make the exchange again.

(They change papers.)

The hope is o'er!
Home of my race, Farewell! Farewell! And you
Proud cousin—I'll not injure you. Adieu!

Is about to go when the sound of a hunting horn is heard without.

DOCTOR.

Hark! What sound on the air does float?
'Tis Joyeux's call. I know the note.

GUILLEMARD.

(Rushing to a window.)

'Tis he! 'Tis he! From his horse he springs;
The master's foot on the threshold rings;
Our folk crowd round him. He speaks! They cheer!
Aha! and our skies begin to clear.

DOCTOR.

Throw open the door!

GUILLEMARD.

The welcome swell!

JOYEUX.

(Without.)

All's well, my friends! All's well! All's well!

Joyeux enters. He has a casket under his arm.

What met to meet me, all of you,
My loving and most loyal few!
Here, Guillemard, ease me of this thing.

Hands him the box.

I would I had more hands to wring
Your hands my friends, and press you close
Unto my heart, that overflows
With the laughter of home coming love.
But back! Give way! From heights above
My goddess is descended. Wife

Again I reach you through the strife,
Again the ride, again the kiss,
Again I claim my Rosalys.

ROSALYS.

Joyeux, thank God! I live again!

JOYEUX.

This pays for all the doubt and pain.
But you are white and cold, almost
Transparent. Ha! my beauteous ghost
I have a fire will warm you well
You shall glow a rosy miracle.

ROSALYS.

There that will do. Your manners! Bear!
Look! here's a guest. Our friend, Isere.

JOYEUX.

Sir, 'tis your fault I know your face
So badly. Thrice welcome to this place.

ISERE.

I am your servant, sir—Your friend—
If you will have it.

JOYEUX.

Without an end—
My hand upon it. How fortunate I
To draw you into this company—
My nearest friends—the best on earth,
Men of approved, of noble worth—
Pray give me leave to greet them each!
Roubaix! What ho! man, do we reach
The Arcana? Is the Secret known?

Hast wrought the work, aloof, alone
Without your pupil?

ROUBAIX.

Aye, 'tis done.
A little money needs, and won
Life's key is ours.

JOYEUX.

Why then, Huzza!
There is no obstacle, no bar—
To our great purpose. How now Gueret
Dawns on mankind the better day
Is our last pamphlet out?

GUERET.

Things stand
Well, though they lack the master's hand.

JOYEUX.

Raoul, Raoul, my best of best—
To my arms boy. Say has this old nest
Fledged full this singing bird of mine.

RAOUL.

Why faith, Joyeux, here's so much wine
That rhymes come hardly, and instead
The singing's mostly in my head.

JOYEUX.

Boy, know thyself, and rise to be
A Lord of Immortality.
We others on the threshold grope
And hope to do some good and hope
A little in men's thoughts to live,

But the god in thee needs but give
A cadenced sigh, or breathe some words
Oracular, and Time reverbs
The utterance. Sing some girl and she
Will madden all posterity,
Some hero, and for many a year
Made in his image men appear;
Thine, thine to set the copy fair
Which all must follow—or despair;
And still, and ever—shall thy soul
Gild thy own age—its aureole.
Respect the god then in thy breast.

RAOUL.

He wakens to your words, at least.

JOYEUX.

Now, Pierre Herode, your honest hand.
You love me, and at my command
Your wealth lies—Ha! I know you come
To ease me of scruples for the sum
I am pledged to you—to say it may
Stand over to another day.
Our honor will not have it so—
We promise and that thing we do.
Guillemard, the casket.

GUILLEMARD.

Now we'll see!

JOYEUX.

I knock, cry Open Sesame!
And look—

Opens the casket and pours out on the table a mass of jewels.

HERODE

O heaven! O paradise!

GUILLEMARD.

What say you of my prophecies?

RAOUL.

Wonderful! Beautiful!

ROUBAIX.

Aha! we win.

HERODE.

Frozen forms with fire within,
Earth's eternal eyes of light,
The condensed infinite,
Souls of planet, sun or star,
More lasting than men's spirits are,
You I worship! Here I find
A faith fitted to my mind!
Preachers' stuff and Doctors' strife
Is naught unto this truth and life.

ROSALYS.

Some Fairy loves you, I'm afraid.

JOYEUX.

Think'st thou I found them—or have made?
They came as things in usual move,
By purchase, conquest, labor, love.
All my ancestors lie there,
Their sins and virtues debonair!
These are the Treasures of our House,
Meant to deck still its present spouse.

My mother held them. When she heard
My needs, she gave them without word.
I would my love their only use
Were to fret your golden hair with dew
Or clothe you in their frost and fire.
But you must as I do, desire
To pay our debts first. Well Herode
O'er count they not what we have owed?

HERODE.

They must be valued. At a guess
I think so. Why they are numberless!
Rose cut diamonds tabled wide,
Brilliants for a monarch's pride,
Rubies that a god might wear,
Opals out of all compare,
Ropes of pearls. O Sir, I bow—
I never honored you 'till now.

JOYEUX.

Well sir, return them to their nest;
To-morrow can arrange the rest.
And now with Guillemard speak. We have
Wants present, pressing and most grave
Here at the house, I understand.

HERODE.

I am your servant to command.
Come Guillemard.

They go aside.

ISERE.

Joyeux, adieu—
Good fortune still attend on you.

JOYEUX.

None can be better than to keep
Your friendship to my final sleep.

ISERE.

Sir, doubt it not. Fair cousin, I
Welcome your new prosperity.
The ending of this day restores
All that seemed lost. Our honor soars
On stronger plumes—and you no less
Must rise to larger happiness.
So, though in this I have no part,
I with reflected joy, depart.

ROSALYS.

My kinsman, though you found me kin
In pride, yet I have, too, within
An equal or a greater mood
Of unforgetting gratitude.

ISERE.

Farewell!

ROSALYS.

But only for a day!

ISERE

In nothing will I say you nay—
Exit.

RAOUL.

Wake up Roubaix—Come Gueret, here
We are not wanted—seaward steer—

ROUBAIX.

Madam, good day.

GUERET.

Fair Saint, my prayers

Mount up to heaven in your affairs.

Exit Raoul, Roubaix and Gueret.

DOCTOR.

I have seldom known so glad an hour—
To both adieu.

Exit.

HERODE.

Ah, Sir, my power

Is at your service—Guillemard has
Means needed to supply this place.

Exit.

AMYOT.

God has wrought out a miracle:

Peace and grace keep you—so farewell.

Exit.

ROSALYS.

I am languid, dreamy with delight;

And as one just saved from drowning, hears

Voices, footsteps round him, and within

Feels a growing warmth through all his frame,

So Joy's tide come into me again.

JOYEUX.

Pardon me Rosalys

My heavy absentness of thought.

My haste made wings and yet my soul outran them
To greet your image that I saw
Rosy, with outstretched arms upon the threshold
Of our new mightier life.
Yet now for some brief moments, give me leave
To visit the companions of my studies
And hear their great reports—
Then I am dedicate to you.

ROSALYS.

No! O no, you must not leave me now.

JOYEUX.

But know my urgency—
My Laboratory has not been
Idle in all my absence.
Perhaps Roubaix has found
The primal Force,
Spark, thought, vibration,
That knits the elements
Aye, is the final element itself!
And Gueret doubtless holds,
Momentous letters from our friends abroad,
Our allies in the work,
That shall uplift mankind.
Even while we wait we make put off
Some universal joy—
And Raoul perhaps has wrought
Verses of golden exultation.
The hour of the Gods
Must not be put aside.

ROSALYS.

Out, alas you do not love me more.

JOYEUX.

How can I love you when I do not know

The constitution of ether,
Nor can grasp the Form of forms?
Be patient, sweet, my wife,
'Till I have penetrated all the masks of nature,
'Till all the warring forces
That live in mortal men
I have tamed and harmonized,
And with the reins in hand
Drive them to nobler destinies;
Then, all my tasks accomplished
The triumph's crown is yours
Vice regent of the world shall you arise,
Happiness shall spring at thy bidding,
We shall re-make all things to Beauty,
And renew the Age of Gold.

ROSALYS.

Easier was it in the olden time:
Then you put your arm about my waist,
Then you kissed my lips and smoothed my hair,
And the Age and World were gold enough.

JOYEUX.

Thou knowest not, simple one,
That conscience is the terrible child of love!
How can we be happier
Knowing the miseries of mankind.
This alone is greatness,
To be more human than humanity,
To wreath into a crown
The woes men would avoid,
To impede the lightning flash that seeks to slay them,
To go before them sounding the abyss,
The pioneer, the prisoner of the void,
To know all, suffer all,
Love all and in the end,
Stand dazzling, stand revealed,
Half equal of the genius of the world.

ROSALYS.

Me you dazzle now. I only know
How to feed the poor and nurse the sick;—
Love alas, is all the gift I have.

JOYEUX.

Adorable one—
Thou art the sun that lights thy circle up—
And all who come in it must be
Thy pensioners for happiness:
But the burning and incalculable love
O'erleaps the special case,
Hopeless with single instances
To help the mass of men;
Such help but makes Fate blacker for the rest:
And by no single means
Can man's aim be fulfilled:
Feed him and he grows fat,
Ambition wakes and he is miserable;
Gratify that and Lust purveys for him,
And the Medusa snakes
Glitter through his shut eyes.
Threefold the enginery I seek to use
To lift man's fallen state;
First I would gain
Nature's last arm of force,
So he may take earth's tilth
With human dignity.
Next I would level inequalities
That harden and degrade,
And last the witch Imagination
Would I lure down from heaven,
To make her home by every human hearth,
And give to every man
Delights beyond all sense, beyond all act,
Loves ever kind and fair,
And issue favorable and fortunate.

ROSALYS.

Fain, O fain would I beside thee struggle
Wing thy empyrean, though to me
Empty are its heights and cold and drear,
But I cannot. Earthy fears beset me,
And death's shadow numbs my energies.

JOYEUX.

Nay! death is not for thee,
Thou intimate of Life,
Still bringing fresher odors,
With brighter chaplets crowned,
Ever renewed, as though Spring were immortal,
With buds forever and perpetual births.

ROSALYS.

O my friend, look soberly upon me,
You have never known me, but have always
Flung on me the image of your visions,
Or beheld through me your beckoning stars,
No sun prism am I, nor ideal,
But a very woman, weak and frail.

JOYEUX.

If I have erred
Teach me, O teach me my mistake to mend!
Dreams will I kill and let oblivion take
Hopes, thoughts, ambitions,
If these do thee offend.

ROSALYS.

Arms and the girl, so sang you once, my Mantuan of to-day.
Make me again your theme, and look! What would you
you find to say?

Lies, pretty lies. But O my glass frowns down your loyal
 lips,
 Then dreadful in its depths I dawn and darken in eclipse:
 Ghost and no girl I seem. The fire that filled my eyes,
 instead,
 Has gone to light on either cheek these torches awful red;
 And see my wrists—poor petted things—how frail! The
 bracelets shake
 Like chestnuts on some wind swept bough, or rattles of a
 snake!
 Yes, I must die! That's sure! And now economize to live,
 Banish the dread; forget the doom—Joy, rapture, take and
 give:
 Where the white bathers rise and break from out their foam-
 ing sheath,
 Or where the dancers come and go, as comes and goes my
 breath—
 There let me move and nobly mad for my few hours left,
 Possess the lands that stretch beyond and take the years
 by theft.
 Ah friend, you frown! What! Must I hold the thought of
 death more dear
 Than all the figures of the world—the warm, the bright, the
 near?
 Men may with dim abstractions dwell, their spirits may
 find room
 With Art on her cold pedestal, or Glory in his tomb;—
 Nature gives us another gift, through all our bodies rife
 She pours the tides, the tumult flow—the rolling fires of
 Life.
 To you the distance moulding thought, the shadowy forms
 of fame,
 The races of the world declare the glory of our name.
 I dreamed, last night I dreamed I lay where soon I must be
 laid,
 In the all hospitable vault's inviolable shade;
 I could not move! My soul rebelled! Dumb, dumb, I
 seemed to rave,
 'Till on a sudden up I rose and glided from the grave.
 Through gloom, through snows, by unknown paths, I came
 —how—ask the birds,

Unto the porch where lingered yet the spell of your last
words.
No need to knock or ope, but in—I floated like a cloud,
Where, moaning on your bed you lay and breathed my
name aloud
“Awake!” I cried “come forth O friend and make the world
anew,
Too long, too long has Death usurped the realm where Love
is due”
I touched your lips—Unmeaning eyed you rose—and hand
in hand
We took one step outside, and lo! We trod a sunlit land.
The track of my warm feet had been a Springtide to the
earth,
My breath had wooed the buds apart and filled the birds
with mirth:
Through the thin ranks of sparse leaved trees we went
until we came
Unto a blossom fragrant glade yith flowers and grass aflame,
You sat me on a bank, you kissed my arms and hair and
mouth,
No grave damp there but all the warmth and fragrance of
the South.
Renewed with love, I rose o’er life to touch the heights
divine,
I stamped my foot. Earth oped—Arose things of the
lion line,
Two harnessed shapes of monstrous mould. I sprang into
a car
With riot in my blood I rode, infuriate and afar.
Ravines, streams, woods swept huddling past—the roads
and walls of men:
I rode, I rode towards Dindymus or Ida’s midmost glen;
And on my track, before my flight—rose up a frenzied rout,
Strange women from those glooms and graves new born
unto my shout;
And all the quarry of the woods, pard, boar or lion strong
With crash of cymbals, clash of drums they drew and drave
along;
They tossed their hair, they tore their breasts, they smote
those beasts with rods

"Make way" they cried "for Cybele, the Mother of the Gods!"

And on we rolled and with the roar and blaze of our great flight

Shook Silence from his throne and made a nebulae of night;
Trees broke to life—the rocks conceived, the earth brought forth new kinds,

And the crag touching clouds bore sons unto the crashing winds,

And mightier still the flashing ones the kings of heaven thronged there,

With voice, with flute, with lyre they gave my triumph to the air.

While I sublime with towered front above my lions stood,
And felt the Goddess strike in awe through all my surging blood.

So did I dream and so I woke, with sweat convulsed limbs,
And in my ear, though faint yet dear the surge of those great hymns.

No more to Dindymus shall throng the synod of my sons,
My daughters do me homage there drawn from their radiant thrones.

Frail blossom of a mortal tree that may not form to fruit,
For me the distance wears no palms, for me the years are mute,

Then dear, let me make spoil of day—aye, ere death quench my spark,

Life's roses rifle with both hands to carry to the dark:

Give me to glut my soul with sight of woman's radiant grace,

The splendor of the sons of men and childhood's flower-like face;—

O not enough can I behold, such forms, the proud, the fair,
The heirs denied to my desire, the race of my despair—

JOYEUX.

O, mistress, magician, Queen,—

My brain intoxicate

Reels with thy vision

Come, let us hand in hand

Go from the cold, dark North
To the South, to the sun, to the day.
We shall live, we shall love, for an age
Or together shall enter in
Death's gates to a greater life.

ROSALYS.

It is late, too late I fear—
Yet will I struggle and hope—
But now I am cold—am faint
The air oppresses me here—
Circle me round with your arm
And lead me away to my room.

JOYEUX.

Come, I will guide you and guard.

Exit Joyeux and Rosalys.

A casement opens and Mother Gobre cautiously enters.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Now the night does loom and lower;
Foul the deed and fit the hour;
The good planets are in swoon;
Mists climb over the fall of the moon;
Every omen, every sign
Auspicious is to me and mine.
I have seen and I have heard
Foolish act and fateful word—
See! the Treasure here is left
Open unto any theft,
All this House's fame and fate
In one box are concentrate.
Adverse fortune never schools
The confiding faith of fools.
Sleep, my Mistress, sweetly dream,

Sleep my Lord—'till morning gleam!
The Treasure's mine—I go! I go—
To finish what is yet to do.

Takes the casket and Exit.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

Another room in the Chateau. Table at one side, set with food, wine, &c.

Doctor, Raoul, Roubaix, Gueret.

RAOUL.

Dead!

DOCTOR.

Dead!

RAOUL.

Poor lady!

DOCTOR.

Poor Joyeux!

ROUBAIX.

Dead! Why could she not have waited. A little more and I had conquered death!

RAOUL.

An old song runs in my head—

There's a foot in the stirrup beside the dark porch,
Something waves in the seat like a gust stricken torch,

It has won the world's freedom, can race with the wind,
But O the strait prison it leaves there behind.

GUERET.

How befell it—How happened it—What caused this
strange, this sudden visitation of Fate?

RAOUL.

A pox on your visitations. Let me alone. I must compose
an elegy.

DOCTOR.

You know of the theft of the jewels.

GUERET.

That too! This troubled house! Thrice terrible and
mysterious dealings of Providence!

RAOUL.

Pish!

DOCTOR.

Joyeux suddenly remembered leaving them in the hall.
He returned there for them. They were gone. He could not
disguise the loss from her nor the consequences of it. The
stain on their honor and the threatened beggary were too
much for her weak state. She passed from one fainting fit
to another and at last her spirit slipped through my fingers
like a bird that has struggled to be free.

RAOUL.

Ha! Yes! But how does Joyeux take her death?

DOCTOR.

Mad now, in full tilt. Formerly the winds did but play

about the tiles and rafters, but now the whole house of him is filled with shrieking gusts—He flung himself from us when she died and left the Chateau while the dogs were howling their requiem—I fear for his life—

GUERET.

The loss of the Treasure, too, will make a great difference to him.

RAOUL.

To us, too. Why man we are under suspicion—We are interdicted. We shall be tortured to reveal its hiding place—ripped open to discover pearls and diamonds.

DOCTOR.

Well! 'Tis a melancholy day!

Enter Pere Amyot.

AMYOT.

Peace to this mourning house!

DOCTOR.

We need your blessing, father. Is your holy work done?

AMYOT.

The room is darkened. The candles are lit—two sisters watch beside her bier. She sleeps in saintly rest. The Church has redeemed its own.

DOCTOR.

You did not doubt that. Poor angel she did good even by smiling and her life was a continual service of worship and song.

AMYOT.

Think you I knew her not. From childhood I have checked her and reprov'd her and been harsh to her. I have almost torn her nature in pieces to make it nearer unto God's design—

DOCTOR.

Why, what had you to reproach her with?

AMYOT.

Her riot of animal spirits. Her infinite gayety. Her insatiable craving to make everybody happy.

DOCTOR.

Why these were the best things in her. Being such the wonder is disease should touch her.

AMYOT.

Body's health may be soul's sickness.

DOCTOR.

Well the body is a friend and the soul a stranger. We had best cultivate our acquaintances.

RAOUL.

Gentlemen! Gentlemen!

DOCTOR.

You are right. This is no time to dispute. I was wrong.

AMYOT.

She is safe in heaven.

DOCTOR.

(Aside.)

Then 'twere better to die before being born.

RAOUL.

Hark! There are hoofs in the courtyard.

DOCTOR.

The first of condoling friends.

Enter Marquis de Isere.

ISERE.

By your looks I see 'tis true!

DOCTOR.

A dreadful truth!

ISERE.

Horrible! Age's penalty in youth!
Eclipse on midday. The eagle in its might
Bit by the arrow at its highest flight;
Winds laid, the harbor sighted—and the ship
Sinks 'neath the smiling ocean's level lip.
O 'tis portentous!

DOCTOR.

You come quickly, sir—

AMYOT.

Would I had outrode rumor unto her
Something I might have done. But where's Joyeux?

DOCTOR.

Out in the dawn fighting his new found woe.

AMYOT.

Why let him be a man. The shock is past—
He'll follow her, he need not fear, at last;
But meanwhile earth has duties. Work's to do—
And from the wreck much may be rescued, too.

Enter Pierre Herode.

RAOUL.

Here's one for salvage.

HERODE.

Is it so! Is it so!

DOCTOR.

You come to add your tears to ours that flow!

HERODE.

Alas, poor Lady, yes. But the thing's out
That the jewels, the treasure's lost. Resolve my doubt.

ISERE.

What is't to you?

HERODE.

Sir, they were pledged to me,
For monies. Because of them Joyeux was free.

ISERE.

You have your bonds and deeds.

HERODE.

But jewels are
A more immediate wherewithal by far—
Property is a care. Thieves may make way,
The moth corrupt it and the rust decay:
But jewels have wings to aid you in your flight,
They are a satisfaction to the sight,
They add unto your pomp and aid your mirth,
They are the most immortal things on earth.
They must be found.

ISERE

Beware how you proceed!
This solemn hour waits not upon your greed.

HERODE.

You threaten me!

ISERE.

'Twere easier to perform.

HERODE.

Well, I will go in peace—but come in storm.

ISERE

Greatness is something even though in evil
But O, to be a little, minor devil!

HERODE.

Raoul, Roubaix, Gueret, I bid you all
Meet me this even at the house of call
Here in the village—

Exit.

ISERE

Will you do his tasks—

RAOUL.

We must in part do what the devil asks.
He has our notes. But join we in no plot
Against Joyeux.

DOCTOR.

He's here! He sees us not!

Enter Joyeux, as in a trance.

JOYEUX.

Hush! the Great Ones are there!
They are seated on their thrones,
The Eternal, Lonely Ones!
And our petty human talk,
Like the cricket's hum that drones
On the heavy, vacant air,
Is unheard. They do not see
Us beings that seem to be,
For They, They only are.
I fled from my ruined house,
Down the length of the alley walk,
And the muffled steps of the leaves
Followed me—followed far.
Dull in heaven glowed one sole star,
Silence itself did drowse.

Then where the woodland most grieves
I heard a rich carouse,
Silvery voices at war
With gold sonorous tones;
I turned aside to a glen
And the world of Now and Then,
Faded, fled, was past;—
All the unapparent Ones
Rose radiant as suns:—
O God that I should see at last
What my soul loved and loathed.
On a grass barrow cast,
In sables clothed,
Eminent among equals Evil lay,
Retired as though disdaining rivalry or sway;
Opposing him
Love sat with ivory breast and naked limb,
Roseate in rhythmic grace and wild enchanting whim;
Birth beside her laid,
Cradled in that glade,
Ever innocent;
Blue eyes upward bent;
With livid form and phosphorescent face,
Decay was next, tho' fixed into no place;
Royal Youth there stood,
Richly to his mood
In purple and in golden pomp arrayed,
With hair that crisping fell
And eyes that looked on Love so wildly well;
Death was by him sat
Articulate vision, that
Transparent seemed through all his mass of shade;
Identity rose there,
And in his bosom bare
A burning coal that was his heart displayed;
While round and round Disguise
Ran in alternating wise,
And now was liker life than ruddiest Love herself,
And now the semblance seemed of that skeleton elf;
All these and others more,
Grouped on that forest floor,

Darkened there or glowed:—
Then a voice outflowed
So smooth, so sweet, so strong,
That melody it made of most opposed things,
Harmony's own song
Raised and moved and made anew those phantom kings.
"Why O why" is said
"Are we hither led?
Ah it is, it is the bridal eve!
The long betrothal ends,
Strength with Beauty blends,
Chaplets of poison blooms and Autumn foliage weave!
Rise. Rise in reverence,
For down these halls of sense
Evil and Love step forth to lead the dance!
Wake Echo, Echo, up!
Drain, drain each silver cup;
The auspicious hour is here and here Time's blissful trance."
Rose they all then from their thrones,
Bowing to those Central Ones,
Evil who upstarting stood,
Like a blood red sunset in an Autumn wood,
Love who forward blushing came,
Bathed in the glamor of a moonlike flame;
Hand in hand those two did lead
A minuet o'er the mead,
And the others trod the measure
Of grave and stately pleasure;
While still that voice flowed on
Unwavering and unworn;—
"Love and Evil wed—
Blessed, blessed be their bed,
Time from then shall see
A long linked posterity."
Ceased the voice,
The vision decayed and fled,
And I, I know not how,
Saw my towers again,
The towers of the home of the dead.
The world of Then and Now,
Comes back with a doubled pain,

My heart may no more rejoice,
Buried deep with the dead.

ISERE

Too little have I known you, *Sieur Joyeux*
But we are drowned in the same gulf of woe.
Remediless is all our grief—and yet
Where no bounds are, bounds must our spirits set;
Or else dissolved—lose firmness, shape, relief,
Too feeble even to feel a manly grief.

RAOUL.

Wake! We are all in like case. I' the ground
At foot of all my rainbows I have found
A scull and cross bones. Dash aside thy tears,
Turn groans to music for transported ears,
For sorrows are like leafless trees in Spring
Blotted with bird nests that will shortly sing.

AMYOT.

Joyeux, thy grief is blasphemous and wars
Against the Power that rules the earth and stars.
What thou weak thing—thou flaunting fribble froth,
Wouldst strive with him that launched the Behemoth,
Who orders the disorders of the world,
This pageant whirlwind that through space is hurled
This nothing—everything—that only seems,
Our race of visions and our place of dreams?
Life is but loss if in itself it rest,
But O, returned to Him, the soul is blest.

ISERE

Strengthen your mind—harden your muscles—and
Force the rough world with gesture of command.

Griefs private hide and but to men reveal
Fire that is only struck from flint and steel.
What man, there's joys yet in the common stock,
Business, adventure, strife, the battle shock!

RAOUL.

Think that your banished love will still descend
And be an inspiration without end:
Those souls ride best the storming waves of strife,
Anchored in some else all forgotten life.

AMYOT.

Think that her blessed soul in Heaven's true Court
At play with other hand maids of like sort
Lives ransomed, rescued, perfect in pure bliss,
Where the Real Presence and True Image is.
Rejoice and not regret that she in heaven
Mounts o'er the storm by which your soul is driven!

DOCTOR.

Joyeux, our consolation opes and ends
With the admission that there's no amends.
Yet though we foolish words and fables weave,
Doubt not we grieve for her for whom you grieve.

JOYEUX.

That's the true note. Me! Think you that I care
For life's remainder I would spill in air?
Tush! for your business and your joys of earth;
Tush! for your fancied heaven and the new birth;
Tush! for grief's music! Think you I design
To tune my woes for herds of human swine?
I will be obstinate in hate and grief,
That still can please me! That can give relief!

Your God, whose heirs we are, trains us to be
Spendthrifts, then plunges us in poverty:
I will not honor Him who is engaged
Cheating poor souls in His iron prison caged.

ISERE

I too loved Rosalys!

RAOUL.

And I!

DOCTOR.

And I!

JOYEUX.

But not enough. Come, I'll your tempers try.
Aim is the trademark of society:
To, Will To Do, To Have, but not To Be.
Will you renounce with me its fret and taint?
Beside the lake in memory of our saint,
I'll build a tomb and chapel. With me there
Spend your remaining days in fast and prayer:
Or else barefooted beggars let us go
And preach a true religion of new woe,
'Till pilgrimages shall be made to her,
And miracles shall set men's souls astir—
Will you about it.

ISERE

I'll raise cows instead.
Life has its duties though a woman's dead.
Reasonably and unreasonably well
I loved my cousin—but no need to tell
She was no more a Saint than I a priest.
Let not your wits out for a maggot's feast.

AMYOT.

Thou utterest as thou actest sacrilege—
Make a cathedral of a country hedge!
Turn a young woman to a sainted thing,
While I her spiritual master humbly ring
The chapel bell to call her worshippers!
I to go barefoot, beg and sleep in furze!
Thou art mad, Joyeux!

JOYEUX.

So much for sympathy.
Raoul, will you, too, turn away from me?

RAOUL.

Anything for adventure. I'll don cowl.
'Twere fun to see the starling turn an owl.

JOYEUX.

Hark and mark the runes of Fate!
The good, the beautiful, the great
Rise and crown themselves a space.
Vanish then and leave no trace.
The last star that treads the dark
All the others feel and mark,
Atom to atom thrills through time,
Nor ever ends the answering rhyme,
Aye if one atom were destroyed,
All the universe were void—
But man's centred soul, unmoved,
Outlives the loss of all it loved.
Let's the light of life go out,
And light some candle to grope about.

DOCTOR.

Else the world would die with one
God forbid such a unison.

JOYEUX.

Goes over to table and takes up a glass of wine.

Hence Philosophy severe!
Prudence hence with maxims drear!
We'll forget too in our way,
Once again make holiday.
Banished be the shades of woe—
Exorcising wine let flow.

ISERE

What! Is this a time to drink?

AMYOT.

He is lost or mad, I think.

DOCTOR.

Better humor him and so
Draw him hence.

JOYEUX.

How! do you go
There into corners. I have here
Friends enough to make me cheer.
Wilt not, boys?

RAOUL.

I' faith I'm dry.

GUERET.

I am with you too.

ROUBAIX.

And I.

JOYEUX.

Drink, but not to futile powers!
Love rides not with the radiant hours,
Death has triumphed over Love;—
She is gone whose spirit strove
Singly against the sullen dark;
Her crushed ashes yield no spark:
She is gone and what is left?
The adder and the crowned eft,
The foul revel of the worm,
Desires and deeds and days infirm,
Dumb motions in earth's violent dust,
Lust and Death and Death and Lust.
The infection of the grave
Roots under life to make life rave.
Comrades crown each cup amain
Drink and drink and drink again.

RAOUL.

The toast can never spoil the wine
We drink to Death, O master mine!

JOYEUX.

We shall live again—but how?
Dissolved in the ebb and flow—
Fragmentary in others born
Shall be the garment we have worn;
Part of the old eternal strife.
But that countenance of life,
The soul that rose when our atoms met,
That doth rise and that doth set:
As well may I hope to see
Yesterday sunset glow for me,

As the red blaze of Rosalys
Start beneath my greeting kiss.

RAOUL.

Rosalys! I gave her name
Drink to her enduring fame!

GUERET.

Joyeux in his drinking lags.

ROUBAIX.

Aye, but we be pretty wags.
Fill your cup and clink with mine.

GUERET.

And mine.

RAOUL.

Come Joyeux!

GUERET.

Stick to the wine!

JOYEUX.

Wine! Aye wine—That is the truth!
That is Wisdom! That is Youth!
In this cup Religion lives,
And the Pagan fugitives,
Hallowed saints and martyred men,
Enthusiasts, prophets, come again;
Poetry in another cup
Foams with bubbles climbing up,
Breaks against your lip and laves
You in its enchanted waves;—

A wager I will measure out,
Scrupulously, without doubt,
Love, with some minims of this wine,
Heroism, coming to this line,
Hope, with a crowned beaker bright;
Oblivion then—and welcome night.

AMYOT.

Thou this course hast quickly run!
Oblivion with thee has begun.
Thou forgettest thou art a man.

JOYEUX.

Flings his flagon away and falls forward with his head on the table.

Would that I could!

AMYOT.

The fool's poor plan,
So to hide from harm and hurt.

DOCTOR.

Gently! He is ruin girt.

JOYEUX.

Starting up again.

A change! A change! The soundless air is full of whisper-
ings
And music, music, soft and sweet a nameless comfort brings.
Hear ye the strains?

ISERE

I none!

DOCTOR.

Nor I!

AMYOT.

The sequel of the cup!

JOYEUX.

How now! Light breaks through these black walls. The
day, the day is up.

His red and splendid shafts are sent in fiery throng on
throng—

Ye see them?

ISERE

No!

DOCTOR.

And perfumes too—Unheralded along
Comes the invasion of the Spring!

ISERE

You dream—

JOYEUX.

And dancers go
Elaborate, airy moulded shapes in motion's magic flow!
Behold you them?

AMYOT.

Ah wretched soul! bound in illusion's chains.

JOYEUX.

My heart grows light and ecstasy mounts tingling through
my veins
Some promise of a change—some hope—some happiness is
near
Hark at the door! Behold! It comes, 'Tis here, the thing
is here.

Enter Madelon Gobre.

MADELON.

Good-morrow, Sirs.

JOYEUX.

What form art thou, thou thing of rose and white
That like an Angel of the Dawn comes to the Lords of
Night?

MADELON.

My name is Madelon.

AMYOT.

Beware! The Witch's daughter, this!

JOYEUX.

Come to me child. What brings you here?

MADELON.

My Lady Rosalys
Met me but now in the dark wood and bade me hither bring
Some strewnments from the woods and fields upon her bier
to fling.
The flowers have vanished from the hills, the grass is crisped
and brown

And the blossoms hang no more their lamps within the
Robin's town.
But the trees yield later harvests. Here bring I an oak
wreath,
And the red leaves of the chestnut to make a crown for
death;
The lady of the forest the birch tree slim and white
And the aspen and the willow their tribute gifts unite,
And the maples' yellow riches. I bear and bring them all
An apron load, upon her bier and on her grave to fall.

JOYEUX.

You say you met my wife to-night. Not yet the vaulted
tomb
Has shut her from the throng of life and blazoned forth her
doom
But the chains of Death are on her limbs—she lieth mute
and cold,
Part of the past—as far removed as the great Queens of old.

MADOLON.

And you her husband yield her thus. To me who was her
friend,
She lives and moves and talks and smiles and will without
an end.
We made a league, as girls will do—My mother wrought
a spell,
And if she wished, or I, where one, the other was, as well.
I breathed her name in the forest glade and swift she there
did glide,
And we ran along the chequered paths as Fawns run side
by side—
Or if lonely in her chamber she called me, low and sweet,
I heard and came and passed these walls and sat beside her
feet;
Distance nor time could part us—nor shall the thing called
death,

For our spirits pierce beyond his power—above or under-
neath—

JOYEUX.

You saw her very self this night?

MADELON.

Aye, on the middle hour,
She stood in all her beauty beside my rocky bower,
White to her eyes—but they so deep with lovely colored
flames:
She called me! She called you—She linked and wove our
names,
And she bade me bring you tidings that she lingered near
you yet,
And a tryst to meet her in my home when next the grass
is wet.

JOYEUX.

And may I hope to see her?

MADELON.

Why not, if you are good?
For innocent are the spirits that haunt our magic wood.
They laugh at the graves and marble vaults where you
would shut them in,
And they play with me all purged and clear of pain and
woe and sin.

JOYEUX.

Lead me to her—Although my soul must pay the forfeit
wage,
For one more hour with her I'll give the immortal heritage.

MADELON.

Give me your hand! We will go forth to where my mother
dwells,
And she will purge your eyes and heart with her most
potent spells,
And make you see as we can see, who free and joyous live;
And your Rosalys of the wild wood glen shall kisses take
and give.

AMYOT.

Stand to prevent this errand!

ISERE

Hold Joyeux!
Let me your image in a mirror show.
We were a peaceful and contented folk,
Easy the lords—the people felt no yoke;
All was in order—everything by rule,
Even Vice itself had learned in Virtue's school;
We comfortably saw each other sin,
Nor wanted the Millennium to come in;
The present hour the present hour succeeded;
We did not know that anything we needed;—
Then, like a discord in a fitting tune,
Dropped from the dark side of the outlaw moon,
You came into our midst. And from the start
Everything suddenly must fly apart;
All our conditions, that were good enough,
You took to form your cloud fantastic stuff;
You'd learn your granddam to lap ashes—You
Must teach to every man his art anew;
The people with your preachings restless stirred;
Humanity made each man a jail bird;
Your herds died off while perfect bulls you bred;
Your crucible reversed turned gold to lead;
Your poet botched our folk songs into tunes
Such as the Paris pavement even prunes:

In short, like a disordered, wayward star
You drew us all awry to mix and mar.
What's the result? My high born cousin lies
Dead of a broken heart. Her obsequies
You honor with a drunken, beastlike rout;
And with this gypsy wanton now fling out,
To the black practice of some dreadful art.—
Halt! or my challenge answer ere we part!

JOYEUX.

You know me not! Learn then my name! I am
Necessity—and all your world of sham
Burn horribly before me. If you would fight
To the Witch's hollow follow me to-night.
There, when the act is finished that breathes back
Beauty and bloom to this wild world of rack,
I'll welcome you with open arms—and have,
Or give, the priceless guerdon of a grave.

AMYOT.

O thou imperious and impious man—
Thou darest not forth against the Church's ban!
Release the hand clasp of that thing accursed!
Wouldst thou fall lower than the fallen worst
Thrust under in Hell's forges—All earthly ties
Friends, state, conditions—All that hope may prize
Of the future—plead to change thine awful bent;—
And thy wife's dumbness is more eloquent
Still, 'gainst thy soul's destruction.

JOYEUX.

Let me go.
The future even less than I you know—

AMYOT.

Nay, I will bar the way!

JOYEUX.

Back, from my gate!

Your creed began in love and ends in hate.

On, girl! My horses shall have wings to come

To the true tenants of your tree topped home.

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

A deep ravine with sloping, wooded sides broken with rocks. Towards the back is a cave, before which burns a fire. In the middle foreground a pool thickly covered with Autumn leaves. Night. Mother Gobre and a boy.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Can'st make a noise?

BOY.

Ho! Ho!

MOTHER GOBRE.

And squeal
Like a sow with its leg in a carter's wheel?
Cans't mock the owl?

BOY.

To whit! To whoo!

MOTHER GOBRE.

And the awkward creak of the cawing crow?
Cans't glide like an adder through brake and grass
That the hare shall not hear you when you pass?
Cans't flit like bats amidst the trees
A blot on the darkness, a bit of the breeze?
Cans't tangle a traveller's foot? Cans't start
With gibber and squeak, 'till he swallow his heart?
Cans't thou whisper unseen and pinch unheard?—

BOY.

Boo, what a word!
I pinched our Madget black and blue,
And she never knew!
I crept once under a gossip's gown,
And brought you tales of half the town!
I frightened the Doctor from out his five wits,
And he knows a headstone whereon a ghost sits!
I can do! I can do!
What's new? What's new?

MOTHER GOBRE.

Here to the hated Witch's haunt,
Madget brings a great gallant;
You must take this phosphor mask, and peer
And bob in his face as he draws near,
You must take this torch and along yon ledge
Zigzag down from the topmost edge;
You must cover you with this coat of fur,
And rub 'gainst his legs and purr—and purr.

BOY.

I'm off! I'm off! We'll have rare sport.
I pinch all who come to the Witch's court.

MOTHER GOBRE.

He's tied the broom to the tail of the cat!
Get you gone for a devil's brat.

Exit boy.

So, my lady minx is dead,
And my curse upon her head.
That should end my hate—but no
I forget not, nor forgo
A piece of wax and virtue, she!
Not to be named with such as we!
I must to her house be haled
Cursed and questioned, judged and jailed!
She shall answer for it yet,
Still I can her spirit fret.
Her husband lives. I'll glut my spite
And drag him to our level quite.
I can trance and I can charm,
Poisons have I to help or harm;
He shall have a draught will down
Memory from its ivory throne;
That shall fill his veins with fire;
Loose the rebel fiend desire,
So that she on whom his eyes
First lights shall be his enterprise,
Be she young or be she old
Gamesome, crooked, courteous, cold,
Elf or woman, witch or ghoul
Taintless virgin or lost soul,
Her shall he love and her pursue.
It is said—and now to do.
First my baubles I must hide
In their grave i' the mountain side.

Goes to the cave and returns with Joyeux's casket. She opens it and looks at them.

Glitter and gleam
Like a mountain stream,

Like a rainbow gift,
Vital sparks that glow and shift!
Sapphires tinct with blue,
Rubies blood bright,
Opals of every hue,
Diamonds all light.
I know ye well! Ye are not dead!
Each one can lift a crested head,
Basilisk or serpent eyed,
Venom toothed to conquer pride;
Man's honor ye can stain,
And woman's worth,
This casket does contain
The ills of all the earth;
Then sleep my pets,
My pretty ones, my witty ones repose,
Your mother frets
'Till ye are loosed to prey upon her foes—

Goes to the back of the scene and places casket in a hole in the ground and covers it with earth and rocks.

Joyeux and Madelon enter clambering down the slope.

MADOLON.

Give me your hand.

JOYEUX.

No, child I can make shift.

MADOLON.

One foot make sure, ere you the other lift.

JOYEUX.

How can you down this dark descent find your way?

MADELON.

Why 'tis the threshold where I daily play;
'Tis open to the arrows of the moon,
And the sun blots and speckles it at noon.

JOYEUX.

A double twilight now of trees and sky—

MADELON.

Here take this bough and swing yourself where I
Am resting.

JOYEUX.

Ha! Methought a face of flame
Peered at me through the bushes whence I came.

MADELON.

One of my mother's imps born from the mire.

JOYEUX.

Down yon black front of hill a ball of fire
Runs zigzag.

MADELON.

'Tis some phantom from beneath.
They go and come before my mother's breath.

JOYEUX.

Well, to the bottom we at last have come.

MADELON.

Yes, 'tis the very hearth place of my home.

JOYEUX.

Ha! here's a pool. Now know I where we are.
'Tis the great hollow of the woods of Carre!
Rumor maligns it, and traditions hold
That here the Druids—our forbears of old,
Met for their revels and solemnities,
And on stone altars, under the mossed trees
In the moonlight, circled by a frenzied rout,
Let out their victims' lives with gushing gout
To this still colored and thick curdled wave,
Which afterward magical visions gave
Of all the future. Know you this, I pray?

MADELON.

Not I sir—nothing—but my mother may—

The fire blazes up and Mother Gobre comes forward.

MOTHER GOBRE.

What night birds at my threshold croak.

MADELON.

Mother, 'tis Sieur Joyeux.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Great folk,
What do they at a poor wife's door?
Faggots I from the forest floor,
Gather and sell—nor with all my care
Hunger and cold away can scare,
Yet now the lord of the whole wide land

Comes to me with a bold demand.
Ha! Ha! This is a theme for mirth
What can he want from a worm of earth.

JOYEUX.

Woman, Witch—I ask
That thou bring back, reveal
The ghost, sprite, vision—self—
Of her who was my wife.

MADELON.

Mother his lady wife is dead.
Dear Rosalys from his house is fled,
My sister and my comrade too,
And I knew he could find her here with you.

MOTHER GOBRE.

And do you, sir, believe such silly tales
And come to a witch to buy wind for your sails?

JOYEUX.

I believe nothing
In heaven and earth!
This is my creed
That Evil alone exists
And you I see are wicked,
Therefore the hope springs that you may have power.
Be your means fair or foul,
Repugnant to each sense,
Blighting to all high thoughts,
I shall not hesitate.
Bid me descend in graves,
Follow corruption to its end,
Bid me drink blood,
Or crouch with snakes and with the slime of things,
I will obey your word—

So you yield to my arms,
My warm and vivid wife:—
And take what pay you will
My purse, my rings—nay, if you will, my soul.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Hey, but this stirs my blood—I like a gentleman of mettle!
Take him into the cave Madge and place him there on the
settle

Give him a crust and a sip to hearten him up for our work,
While I talk to my Patron without and say the prayers of
our kirk.

MADELON.

Come see our home, sir, and you will admit
We are good people, too, though hunger bit.
Don't mind at all my mother's crosspatch ways,
'Tis White Art and not Black with which she plays.

*Joyeux and Madelon enter the cave. Mother Gobre gives
a shrill whistle.*

MOTHER GOBRE.

Boy!

Enter Boy.

BOY.

Here mother!

MOTHER GOBRE.

Strip to your skin!
Slide like an otter the pool within!
Under the surface, without a sound

Swim, 'till it moves like a mill wheel round,
Faster and faster about it go,
'Till the rings of a whirlpool suck below!
Quick, like a frog 'neath the surface dart;
But wait 'till I give the word ere you start.

BOY.

I'll make it whirl. I'll make it spin
'Till it dizzy the eye that looks therein.

He glides into the water.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Leap fire
Higher and higher
'Till my tarnished mirror takes your ire.

Throws wood on fire.

Come forth! Come forth
By a Witch's oath
Ye shall see and do
Strange things and new.

Joyeux and Madelon come out of the cave.

Stand ye by the water's brink,
Stir not, move not, scarcely think;
While on the herbage round I draw,
Figures one, two, three and four;
Triangle in a circle frame,
Square and one I dare not name;
See! the dew wet herbage blights
As my crutch the signet writes;
Fixed now on the water stare,
Gaze 'till all your souls grow there;
Here the magic mirror is

Whence shall rise fair Rosalys;
The rich crown of all the year
Lies on its surface, red and sere;
See the scum begins to stir,
And the pool changes character;
Moving slowly round and round
The leaves are pushed to the circling ground;
Red ringed thus in the central space
The black water shows its face;
Bubbles come from underneath
Like a drowned swimmer's breath;
Now the water faster swings,
Gliding in concentric rings,
Glittering in rounded wakes,
Like a rapid coil of snakes;
Faster, faster, see they go
'Till a whirlpool opes below,
And a lidless eye glares us,
From the bottom of the cup.
Now reverse—
Slow the waters upward rise,
Slow they lose their glittering dyes,
Slow the blackness shows once more,
Slow the scum leaves scatter o'er,
Slow upon your spirits fall,
Slumber! Slumber's numbing pall!
Rigid, silent, tense, transfixed,
Now your cup of fate is mixed—
Joyeux thou sleepest.

JOYEUX.

I sleep!

MOTHER GOBRE.

Thou sleepest Madelon.

MADELON.

So deep!

MOTHER GOBRE.

Be as I bid ye. Madge, within your veins
You feel strange fires, quicksilver mounting pains,
Your eyes light up. Scorn and disdain in them
Looks on a world that crouches at your hem:
You are not brown with hair a tangled net
But rosy with a golden coronet:
You know all witcheries of wedded bliss,
Yor are, you are the Lady Rosalys.

MADOLON.

I am the Lady Rosalys, I know.
Why that is certain. Who dares say—Not so?

MOTHER GOBRE.

Joyeux look up—behold the image here,
Of all that in the world to you is dear
The slender, swaying figure and the face
Of her your heart shrines in its midmost place,
The sunny hair, rich lips and bloom of life,—
Look up—look up and claim your very wife—

Joyeux starts forward but just then the Boy, gliding from the pool, brushes between them and Joyeux and Madelon both awake.

MADOLON.

What happened. I was something, and am not!

JOYEUX.

A moment hence the sun and now a blot!
Woman thou hast done much. Sure I saw here
My true wed wife in all her glittering gear,
Her sweet vexatious charm and mutinous strife,
All her allurements to the very life.
Be it unholy magic or true prayer

That bodied forth her image from the air,
I must have more of it. Call up again
The vision. I will woo it to remain.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Do you believe then in a Witch's Art?

JOYEUX.

I must of force believe it. Though thy heart
Be black, thy work is innocent and good.
Thou givest a starving man delicious food.
If 'tis illusion—let illusion rule,
Unto the dreamer, dreams—cheats to the fool.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Madge to the cave. Wake girl! And hither bring
That flagon with the wicker covering—
And fetch two cups with you.

Exit Madelon.

Now we will see
If you're as brave as your words brave can be.
Dare you drink a drugged potion from my hand
Without a question.

JOYEUX.

Try me and see.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Well sir—
You shall have proved its harmless character!

Re-enter Madelon with flagon and cups.

This girl shall be the taster to the king
And drink before you.

Pours out liquid in a cup.

Here child.

MADOLON.

How, that thing.
What is it for, mother?

MOTHER GOBRE.

For! For saucy airs.

MADOLON.

To cause or cure them?

She drinks.

Ugh—the black stuff tears
Like fire all through me.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Now sir, 'tis your turn.

JOYEUX.

(Drinks.)

To Rosalys! Why yes, the draught does burn—

They stand gazing on each other for a few moments and then Joyeux and Madelon sink in a stupor upon the ground.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Transparent witchcraft have I wrought
Over the proud lord of thought.
So, you lie as she who died,
And my daughter by your side:
Be your past obliterate,
Babes become of newest date:
From your fetters ye shall move
Ye shall wake and ye shall love;
Oblivion over you shall roll,
Passion shall possess you whole.
Rosalys from where you are
Whitely orb'd like a star,
See my triumph! Your beloved
By the Witch's daughter moved,
Shall forget you to your name,
And burn with an unhallowed flame.

She withdraws into the cave. After an interval Joyeux wakes. He rises on one arm first and then gradually to his feet. The fire sinks low.

JOYEUX.

What am I? Am I something somehow lost
I' the bottom of the abysses of the void,
Or a creation newly separate
From chaos? I am I—that do I know;
And that this form is mine—a sure possession,
Amid dark, rebel, limiting opposites:
This couch I rise from is marked off from me:
I stamp on it—it yields not—but this yields
This place or space about me. I can move,
Splendidly vital and I am the same,
Now here as I was there—Am I a god
New born unto a world just new begun?
It must be so!

(He sees the fire.)

Here's something more alive,
Another god—See, how it runs and writhes,
And pales and flickers and leaps up again,
Mutable motion that I cannot match
With any life of mine.

(He picks up a brand.)

O dangerous
And angry god—Why art inimical,
To thy sole partner in this desert world?

(The moon floats into the sky above and shows through the canopy of trees.)

But look! Another life rains all around me:
Comes it from yon white wonder that through bars
Of jagged blackness—smiles down unto me
An invitation to her airy cliffs?
O lucid, rounded being, I will reach thee!
Stay 'till I climb.

He moves and comes upon Madelon asleep in the moonlight.

What's here upon my path—
A still more noble being. Can it be
The presence that inhabits yonder sphere
Descended. White it is like that, but swathed
In shadows. Yet two rounded orbs of light
Break from these foldings to identify
It with yon heaving vision hung aloft.
Yet it is liker to myself. Those locks
Though more profuse and preferable far
Than mine, are the same crowning—and below
Are lineaments of softer, purer make.
While I have slept some power has made division
And framed from me this better part of me,
In pure and adolescent imagery,
Which I must watch and worship and protect.

Wake comrade—and work out our destinies
Amid the deeds and dungeons of the dark!
It stirs! O may I touch it? Gods, the arm,
Smooth, cool and naked, sends a thrill through me,
Firier than yon demon's angry thrust.
Wake my companion! I can wait no more.

MADELON.

Who calls me?

JOYEUX.

I thy summoner and thy guide.
Frailer and fairer art thou, but I feel
A mastery in me which thou must obey.
Wake! We are born! We are risen! Chaos parts
Before us. We are kings and rule the world.

MADELON.

How wonderful all is. What's this that falls
And shifts and shimmers restlessly about me,
Touching me here and here and here with white,
Making me beautiful? And you who are
Wrought over with the self same workmanship,
But mightier and more splendid—Who are you?

JOYEUX.

Ask Him who breathed us into being. I
Know nothing—save I glow within, and see
Your delicate enchantment burnished more
And blazing more and made more palpable,
O'er crusted with pure ornaments of light.

MADELON.

Why I am beautiful! See my wrists and arms,
And this thick flood of something that enwraps me,
And keeps its tawny dusk even in the heart

Of all this whiteness. Is it part of me?
Yes, I must think so. Do you really like me?

JOYEUX.

Liking compels me unto adoration
I kneel to you, fair creature.

MADELON.

What, to me!
I was about to make a prayer to you,
You are so stately, sombre and superb.

(She moves towards the pool.)

O come, come, come—here is another being,
Fairer than I—O fairer far than I.
Upon its front it wears two glorious jewels,
Whose darkness more illuminates than light,
Red underneath two others play and tremble.
How wonderful! But no! No! come not here,
If you see it you will not like me more.

JOYEUX.

Why 'tis yourself—marvelously duplicate!
And look behind it is another me,
And the two images together melt.

MADELON.

Give me your hand! It fears me. What a world—
How marvelous—where we are habitants
Know you, my friend, why we are born in it?

JOYEUX.

I know not! I feel!
I gaze in thy eyes,
And secrets unseal

And futures arise ;
I am other than thou,
Twin we are not,
Triumph is on my brow,
Strife is my lot :
I must war in the forest
With things of night,
Shapes thou abhorest
Must fall in fight,
Then red with the chase,
With labor weary and stained,
Back to thy dwelling place
Bring what I have gained :
Fenced from the strife and stress
There shalt thou reign,
Queen and creatress
Of a new domain :
Peace in that precinct fixed
Life shall solemnize,
And from our beings mixed
More shall arise.

MADELON.

I, too, learn
From your flaming eyes,
What I must do to earn
That Paradise.
I must be, unbought,
Your prize complete,
To your every wish and thought
The hands and feet.
I must dress your food,
Comfort you and please,
Ever be a hoped for good
Tyrant of your ease.
When strife and war alarms
May me allow,
I will hang on you my arms,
As I do now.

JOYEUX.

You are mine—I love you! Come!
Let us seek our forest home.

MADELON.

Hand in hand, which way you show
I in good obedience go—

Exit Joyeux and Madelon.

Enter Mother Gobre.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Go to your Witch wedding! Yes—
My Lady in heaven—I win! Confess!
Now for troubles brewing yet,
Let the scene be newly set;
To the earth I stoop and hold
Here a handful of its mould;
Now I fling the dust in air!
The black atoms upward fare,
And as still they scatter, scatter,
Call they all unhallowed matter,
Each foul force and spirit too,
Gnome, devil—to our rendezvous.
Come the cloudpack—come the crash,
Thunder burst and lightning flash,
Winds in their all ruffling roar,
And the pelting rains downpour!
All the wild world's worst unrest,
Suits our tragic sequel best.

Enter Boy.

BOY.

Mother! Mother!

MOTHER GOBRE.

Hush you brat!
What will the screech owl fool be at—

BOY.

O Mother I ache
I have laughed 'till my bones apart do shake
Laughed myself sore.
Laughed 'till I can laugh no more.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Come hither, my sweet one my image! Quick come and tell
me your news
You shall have a cake from the cupboard, and some honey,
too, if you choose.

BOY.

They are coming!

MOTHER GOBRE.

Who are coming?

BOY.

All the guests from the great house!
I feared they'd have got here before me—but one of them
fell souse
In the brook at the top of the glen—and they rested to dry
him a bit,
And so I ran on before, though I almost fell in a fit.

MOTHER GOBRE.

How many and who are they all?

BOY.

The one with the song and the smile
Who's forever in corners with maids and kisses the wives
 between while;
And him with the tower for a nose and the sunken in
 leathery chaps;
And the man with the great paunch who weeps over every-
 body's mishaps;
And the forge blower with stained hands and eyes that
 seem nothing to see,
They are all of them coming down the glen as drunk as men
 can be.

MOTHER GOBRE.

What do they want?

BOY.

I listened to their talk and this is what I heard:
They were drinking together in the tavern when one of
 them up and said
"Let's find the old hag of a Witch." Of course I knew that
 was you!
"And get her to tell us our fortunes and may be to make
 them, too."
So they hoisted sail and steered here and when I met them
 they seemed to me
Like a drove of pigs that some yokel tries to imagine that he
Is driving to market, but which slip from him, edgewise,
 endwise, sheer,
And one goes clattering down the road in a clamor urged
 career,
And one holds back and one goes slap between the poor
 fellow's legs,
'Till at last he comes to the town with but empty hands,
 I' fegs;
So the ever breaking up company of these drunken, voyag-
 ing men,

Tumbled and tossed down the rocky troublesome path of
the glen:
I forgot to pinch them or scare them—but laid down and
rolled with delight,
As they bumped against the rock on the left or pitched into
the brook on the right:
But, hark! They are coming. I hear them up there at the
mouth of the glade,
And a worser hubbub—I must confess, I never myself have
heard.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Ha! Ha! my pride. I would laugh if I could!
Manikin man does my soul much good
By his plight to-night.
But hark you! Do my errands aright!
Get that runlet of brandy that came from the house
Where I lifted the spell from the barren cows!
Climb with it straightway this rocky slope,
And hide and be ready to broach it and ope,
When I knock with my crutch, so the stuff will foam
And down through this channelled pathway come.
Quick! About it.

BOY.

I go!

Exit.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Revenge comes round!
As the high soaring leaves flutter back to the ground—
I must house me and hood me in darkness and fear;
For the sots draw near.

*Enter Raoul D'Estrees, Pierre Herode, Roubaix and Gueret.
During the following scene the moon disappears, and a storm
arises with thunder and rain.*

RAOUL.—(*Bawling.*)

'Twas in the street—I passed you close
But you, you did not see
Where touched your feet I flung a rose
O Rose of Burgundy—

ROUBAIX.

'Twas not Burgundy—'twas Port!

GUERET.

I pray you! He but sings in sport.

RAOUL.

O what a voyage—what a crew!
Stand forth, stand forth—thou reverend Jew,
That on dry land drowned has been,
And the watery poison taken in;
Aye, thou has sweated blood as well
A Saint Januarius miracle.

HERODE.

Is this the place? Is the witch hag here?
My teeth chatter with chill and fear!
Think you the future she'll unfold?
I tell you, I smell the scent of gold!

RAOUL.

You can't get deeper until you go
To your good master down below,
And so I judge that here we see
The half way house of his deputy.

GUERET.

A cave! A cave! Perchance 'tis hers.
A very worthy woman, sirs.

RAOUL.

Knock in the Devil's name—and forth
The spider will come to take the moth.

GUERET.

I'll not usurp your office—You
Swore to lead us this whole night through—

RAOUL.—(*Knocking.*)

Ho there! within—

MOTHER GOBRE.—(*Within.*)

Who is't calls?

RAOUL.

If prophecy upon you falls
That, certes, you have power to say.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Well do I know you Raoul D'Estrees.
Gamester, ruffler, poet, friend,
Lover of women without end,
Most moth like of the race of men,
What dost thou at the Witch's den?

RAOUL.

Past and present is pat enough,
But they're open tales to be read in the rough—

What of the future—Let me know
How the Fates for me do throw—

MOTHER GOBRE.

I fan the fire upon my hearth;
I read the sparks of flying birth;
They mount and for a moment glow;
Whitely gleam and then they go;—
Beware, thou rash and headlong youth,
The wolves are round thee without ruth,
The starlike crystals thou must shun,
And yet in vain! Thy sands are run—
Thy truest virtue brings thy death,
Loyal shalt thou yield thy breath!

RAOUL.

I ask no better! Next! My place
I yield to thee, O moony face.

GUERET.

Most worthy mistress of this hall,
Tell me what shall me befall!

MOTHER GOBRE.

I stir the earth beneath my feet
Wherein are runes for thee most meet;
Creeping flatterer of the rich,
Orator of hovel and ditch,
Turning both worlds to thy account,
Thy scaffold's ready. I see thee mount.

ROUBAIX.

Mother, shall I at last withdraw
The final veil of Force and Law.

MOTHER GOBRE.

I move the visionary air,
For all thy work and dreams are there.
Fool! thou seekest to animate
Without a soul the frame of Fate.
Away! I see thee stark and chill:
Hunger ends thy tale of ill.

HERODE.

I, mistress, do not seek to have
Unrolled the secret of my grave,
But if in kind bestowal, you
Can any present luck bestow,
As, that I may the casket find
Which doubtless you can call to mind,
I am your friend and—for your ear
Snacks—when we get the booty clear.

MOTHER GOBRE.

The entrails of a vulture, I
Search to read your augury—
They tell me what to do remains
For the requital of your pains—

She comes out of the cave with four flagons which she presents to them.

Here, drink ye all—and after, see
A Witch's hospitality.

RAOUL.

But where's the wine—

MOTHER GOBRE.

That's easy found
'Tis but knocking on the ground.

She knocks on the rock and liquor gushes forth

RAOUL.— (*Drinking.*)

A right, royal fount. My gage
To thy subterranean cellarage!

HERODE.— (*Drinking.*)

Ha! It warms me.

(*Aside.*)

The hag has got
The jewels. And now for a counterplot—

GUERET.— (*Drinking.*)

Madam, I forgive your slur
Unkind, upon my character!

RAOUL.

The liquor's honest come whence it may
I could stand here and drink a night and a day!

MOTHER GOBRE.

Your wishes, gentlemen, avow!
Can I do aught else to pleasure you now?

HERODE.

Aye, that you can—'Tis rumored about,
You have fabulous powers of finding out
Veins of gold that snug lie hid,
The bowels of the earth amid;
That buried treasures you fix and place,
And stolen trifles can truly trace,
Give us a proof of your gifts, and we,
We will reward your sorcery.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Ha! Ha! Do they tell such tales. I must laugh—
Yet they say aright for my crutched staff,
Is a magic thing—is a hazel wand!
Strange sympathy and strange command
Over all hidden wealth it has,
I hold it level and at that place
Where to the earth it draws nigher and nigher
Dig, and you find your heart's desire.

GUERET.

An honest Witch you must confess
Hey Boys—an honest sorceress!

RAOUL.

She's too ill-favored to make us rich!
Well, I drink to the honest witch.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Sirs, are you ready—

HERODE.

We'll follow suit.

(Aside.)

This is some cheat she has afoot
I'll even with her plot for plot,
And have the jewels—blood or not.

MOTHER GOBRE.

Spirits that I charge and charm
Samael, who keeps earth's gates from harm;

Marbuel, guardian of those springs
That thrid the rocks o'erlapping rings;
And Pluto the deep delving gnome
Guide my wand 'till it comes full home!

*She moves about the stage with her crutch held level—
the four men following her and looking over her shoulder.*

The wand grows heavy—it dips—and straight
Sticks in the ground—a finger of fate!
There the earth with your fortune is big—
Dig!

HERODE.

Men to your task!
If we fail, I'll unmask
This hag fiend of evil.

RAOUL.

Dig with our hands? The Devil!

HERODE.

Tools—give us tools!
Do you use us for fools?

MOTHER GOBRE.

Yonder!

(She glides away.)

HERODE.

(Staggering back with picks and shovels.)

Here! Quickly uncover
What the earth lies over.

RAOUL.

(Singing as he digs.)

A spade! A spade! And it buries deep
The seed of the blossoming wheat—
A spade! A spade. The man lies asleep
And the eater the earth does eat.

ROUBAIX.

There's a rock!

GUERET.

And there's another!

RAOUL.

A third—So brother goes with brother!

HERODE.

See you nothing yet?

RAOUL.

A dark hole and a night of jet
Are bad for seeing—but I think I feel—

HERODE.

What?

RAOUL.

Metal 'gainst metal—Steel on steel.

HERODE.

O let me in.

RAOUL.

'Ware. Hold off there
I'll bring the fish I have hooked to the air—

(Leaps out of the hole.)

Why 'tis the casket filched from Joyeux!
Look! All the stars of the heavens glow
In this little vessel. Red they burn,
White like embers they paling turn,
With yellow luster they are bedizzened,
The fire and the life of the world is here prisoned.
What luck for Joyeux. He'll come to his own.
And the Witch that stole them—where has she flown?

HERODE.

Joyeux! You fool! They are ours
Night about us lowers.
No eye sees—No ear hears.
Treasure trove title in us inheres.
The Witch must keep a secret tongue,
Or her neck is wrung.
They are ours, I say!

ROUBAIX.

Were't not a better way
To trust to Joyeux's grateful regard?
He will give us part for reward.

GUERET.

Grateful the rich are to the poor!
Let's keep them all and so make sure.

RAOUL.

Back, you conscienceless thieves!
As a good dog retrieves

A dead bird for his master,
For your talk, all the faster,
These go to Joyeux.

HERODE.

On my knees Raoul. You know, you know,
I have saved you from prison, hunger and cold,
Have helped you to women, wine and gold,
Will you play false after all you've had?
Seize him my friends. He is mad. He is mad—

GUERET.

Yes, yes, my boy. Be ruled by your friends!

ROUBAIX.

We'll use these riches for noble ends!

RAOUL.

(Struggling with them.)

Off! Let me go.

HERODE.

You two, you will not,
Let slip this prize which falls to our lot?

ROUBAIX.

No!

GUERET.

My knife's unsheathed!

HERODE.

Strike 'neath the arm—

(Gueret stabs Raoul.)

RAOUL.

Help! Ho! Help!

(Breaks from them.)

HERODE.

There's none to alarm

(Enter Joyeux.)

JOYEUX.

Who quarrels in this damnable domain?

RAOUL.

Joyeux! Joyeux.

(The others run off.)

JOYEUX.

What man, art thou in pain?
Reeling and bleeding. Here lean upon me—

RAOUL.

This pays for your cursed hospitality.

JOYEUX.

What mean you?

RAOUL.

Here's the casket that you lost.
These pretty gauds a poet's life have cost.

JOYEUX.

Tell me the meaning of this deviltry—

RAOUL.

Lay me down. So! I breathe a little free!
Joyeux—You're versed in translunary things,
Is it true the cherubs are all heads and wings?
Faith, I shall miss the earthly girls I knew.
Good night friend. Gueret did it and the Jew.

(He dies.)

JOYEUX.

Dark hollow, with abhored deeds and dreams
Crowded, as with thy treacherous, shifting gleams,
Death and destruction all about thee lurk—
Here is the crown piece of thy hellish work!
Why could I not come sooner. This poor boy—
Held by strong tenure an eternal joy,
And met life smiling. He is gone—while I
Am naught but gloom—yet cannot even die—

Enter Marquis de Isere.

ISERE.

Who's there that speaks—

JOYEUX.

Nay, who art thou—Declare—
For guilty things still breathe and taint this air.

ISERE.

Thou art Joyeux—Isere does thee salute.

JOYEUX.

O look, Isere, O look! Here, silent, dead,
Lies the best heart that earth inherited,
Raoul D'Estrees. Slain by those brutish beasts,
For whom I garnered gold and furnished feasts.
He died to save my honor—for you see
Here is the casket that was stolen from me.

ISERE.

Another step in the descent of grief!
Leagued to ill-luck and loss beyond belief,
Downward thou goest and draw'st thy world with thee.

JOYEUX.

Thy judgment's gentler than 'twas wont to be.

ISERE.

Aye, since we fight, forgiveness is the word!
One Judge alone can tell who most has erred—
Thou art that Woe incarnate—fatal thing,
Genius, which shatters life that life may spring,
Blither and better from the broken past;
Forgiveness need I too, that iron cast
Stood irremoveably 'gainst thee opposed,
And all thy lightning play in limits closed—

JOYEUX.

My hand. Thou art noble—Thou wilt not refuse .
Shall we make play now—

ISERE.

Here are the rapiers—choose—

JOYEUX.

O this one! Suits the ground.

ISERE.

We must feel—not see!
For these lightning flashes that come fitfully
Are all the torch bearers we can hope to have.
Well, they will serve to usher to a grave.

JOYEUX.

You'll find me easy work, when all is said
My brain is listless—my arm numb and dead.

ISERE.

Sir, as you are an honest gentleman,
Rouse up your spirits, brace your muscles, plan
Your best attack—summon your known sword play—
Or else, if I an easy victim slay,
I will retract my words and brand you base
Recreant and coward—Mark you from this place
There is no outlet hence for one of us.
Thrust with all skill as I shall. Only thus
Can he who lives bear proudly up his head.

JOYEUX.

Why as thou wilt. I am remembered
I have an errand I would do on earth.
To your defence—

ISERE.

I meet you sir, with mirth.

(They fight and after a few passes Isere is wounded.)

JOYEUX.

Art hurt?

ISERE.

'Tis nothing!

JOYEUX.

Rest you sir and drink,
Here at the bubbling fountain's mossy brink.

ISERE.

No! While my blood is warm, let's to 't again.
My answer to your doubled feint was vain!

(They fight again and Isere falls, pierced through.)

Ha! excellent. Your rapier glided in
As a ghost does in spite of door or gin.

JOYEUX.

Is't serious think'st thou.

ISERE.

'Tis the worst—or best—
Your hand, Joyeux. Think me a post addressed
To Rosalys. Your message safe shall mount,

(Dies.)

JOYEUX.

So! And another life to my account—
Sceptre of honor lie there—

(Flings away his sword.)

O, earth, be just!
To you these noble bodies I entrust—
A moonlike force swells all my veins to flood,
I must obey and quit this scene of blood.

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

A Bedchamber in the Chateau. A Bier draped in purple upon which lies the white clothed figure of Rosalys. Candles are burning about the Bier and two black robed nuns watch beside it.

FIRST NUN.

Didst speak?

SECOND NUN.

I! Not a word.

FIRST NUN.

Seemed that I a whisper heard.

SECOND NUN.

'Twas the wind. Ha! Touched'st thou me?

FIRST NUN.

Nay, I moved not.

SECOND NUN.

Jesus, see
Help thy servant. Something cold
Grasped my arm!

FIRST NUN.

Be calm! Be bold!
Tell your beads more fast—more fast!

SECOND NUN.

Hark! That muffled, soundless blast!
See! The candle flames draw in,
Shadows on our vigil win.

FIRST NUN.

Lift your cross unto your lips,
It will exorcise eclipse.

SECOND NUN.

The lights grow dimmer—Sister, here
At your knees I kneel in fear.

(After a pause.)

Darkness grows and silence grows,
Both are near and both are foes.

FIRST NUN.

Bow your head in tender trust,
God will guard us! Angels must!

A clock strikes one.

One o'clock. 'Tis half the night.
Child look us—The room grows bright.

SECOND NUN.

Still I shudder. There has been
To-night some awful birth of Sin—
Whose passing wing—whose trailing train,
Swept through this chamber and my brain.

(Enter Joyeux.)

JOYEUX.

Good night, most gentle sisters.

NUNS.

Sieur Joyeux.

JOYEUX.

I thank you for your vigil. It grows late,
Sleep on your eyelids hangs his leaden weight.
For this surrendered fortress loved so well,
I am to-night the fittest sentinel—
Leave me, I pray you.

FIRST NUN.

Will you watch alone?

JOYEUX.

Aye!

FIRST NUN.

When shall we return?

JOYEUX.

When all is done—

O! when the world's great beacon in the east
Gives the alarm for day's new battle feast—

FIRST NUN.

Adieu!

SECOND NUN.

Adieu!

JOYEUX.

God's benison on you both
Pure sisters of the heaven plighted troth.

(Exit the Nuns.)

They are alive. Here's not their place—But I
May pace thy starless verge—eternity!
Imperious Death here in this room has trod.
Is it an antechamber then to God,
Or Oblivion's portal—This barriered space is rife
Thick as a shuttled film with her past life:
There is no pregnant void in it, but has
Feature or face or figure of what was;
Here she sat, rose, moved, momentarily made
Pictures that could flash out as fast as fade
And marbles melting in each other—Here,
Couched on this window seat, she leaned her ear
To songs whose faceted words grew dim and dull
Outrivalled by her richness. Full, O full
With presences and precious deeds—the room
Glows like a revelation and a doom.
Dare I approach the Bier. O sacrifice,
How thou liest sculptured in life's very guise!
The flush still on thy cheeks—but O—shut close
The orient of thy soul—thine eyes—where rose
Myriads of vital motions—eyes that were

Life's seat—God's seal and secret character.
Wanting their breathing fire—what's all the rest
Outline and color 'neath this swathing vest?
Yet these white arms were my horizon once,
And these twin, rounded breasts, were rival suns
That warmed me—now so straightly, mutely clad—
This rigid thing appalls me. I have had
Everything—All. But bankrupt now I must,
Turn to the blank, the darkness and the dust—
This alabaster image, it is but
A phantom—and the gates of doom are shut
On the real Rosalys. Where and how far,
In what screened passage beyond sky or star,
Walks she to-night in radiance? O cheated fool
Still dreaming in Time's undeceiving school,
Some future past this end thou feignest—but this
Blank wall of flesh is everything that is!
Thy hope would have it that her soul is sent
Forth to discover some new continent:—
But that is folly, fable, illusion fond!
God is a fever! dreams the life beyond!
When—that is soon—I die too—we shall be
Divorced, divided, scattered utterly
The conscious souls that made us, laid aside
Like mummers' masks, that for a moment's pride
Seemed to be something in the shows of life.
What matters it? Let it be so! O wife
One look—one kiss—then, I can do no less
Than follow thee unto thy emptiness—

*Joyeux sinks down beside the bier. The Ghost of Rosalys
rises and stands on the other side of it.*

ROSALYS.

Joyeux!

JOYEUX.

Hark!

ROSALYS.

O Love!

JOYEUX.

What sound is ringing
In my ears?

ROSALYS.

Look up!

JOYEUX.

O Wonder—Thou!
From the bier again in beauty springing,
All the power of Death deriding now—

ROSALYS.

Look below thee.

JOYEUX.

Ha! thy image gleaming
Cold yet tranquil, twin yet one, is here:
Roseate thou in all thy former seeming
Seest thyself still slumbering on the bier.

ROSALYS.

Knowest thou, Joyeux, what I am

JOYEUX.

I care not—
So thou art surrendered to my arms!

ROSALYS.

Poor my friend! Alas to-night I wear not
Human attributes or mortal charms.

JOYEUX.

Thou art living! Hasten—let me greet thee,
Death is in each moment of delay!

ROSALYS.

Would'st embrace me? Air alone will meet thee,
Calm, be calm—and prove the better way.

JOYEUX.

Horror! Madness! Thou art here yet art not—
I'st a mockery of my frenzied brain?
Nay! Such sure and pure perfections start not,
From that charnel cave where Death has lain.

ROSALYS.

Do thine eyes approve me, Joyeux?

JOYEUX.

Glory,
Splendor comes—the Gods come back to earth!
Ne'er in all the bliss of all our story
Was before revealed thy utmost worth.

ROSALYS.

Deem'st me real?—

JOYEUX.

Thy voice can set aflowing—
Golden echoes that run down the wind,

Movest thou—throbb'st thy breast—thine eyes are glowing
With that sovereign light which is thy mind.

ROSALYS.

I a spirit am that thou deniest,
For a moment from my home returned,
To dissolve the gloom in which thou liest
Give the hope for which thy soul has yearned.

JOYEUX.

Be forgot thy home—forgot thy heaven,
Let my kisses warm thee, thrill thee through!—

ROSALYS.

All thy blood itself though freely given,
Would not bring me back thy bride anew—

JOYEUX.

Give'st me nothing?

ROSALYS.

O thou doubting lover,
Is it nothing that I rise to thee,
With immortal hues appareled over—
Naught that I reveal Eternity.

JOYEUX.

Once I sought its secrets in mad fashion,
But another hour has struck at last;—
Give me but an answer to my passion,
God and heaven may vanish in the vast.

ROSALYS.

O my Love I can not help but love you,
Though a rebel on your doom you rush!
List! couch here! while I thus near above you—
All the joy tell of the soul's last hush.

JOYEUX.

Let it be as thou wilt. The fire..
And the tides in my veins retire.
I obey as a child does its mother
That no earth or heaven knows other
Than her brows and her eyes and her cheek.
I am couched—I am calmed—O speak.

ROSALYS.

Wild, wild, wild
Was my breast and mutinous,
When the death thrust parted us.
And I saw thee, struck by Fate,
Reel and stagger, white of face,
Dishonored, desolate.
I could not leave my place,
Could not whisper but a word,
Could not say "I am here;"
I was unseen, unheard—
And a strange thing lay on the bier.
Then came a gush of hope,
Like a moonburst through a cloud.
O'erarching portals seemed to ope
And I floated through them proud:
O what mastery was on me,
What dominion I had won me,
What horizons all at once,
What survey of the mustering of the suns!
Came they marching past,
Rank on rank of stars,
Legions rumored yet more vast,

All in all the equipage of unimagined wars—
Colors infinite,
Gleamed and glowed and altered in my sight:
Vividly in jewelled sparkle,
Many and many a myriad came,
More in purpling glooms did darkle,
Presences of shadowy flame;
Spheres of red or gold,
Olive, ashen, old
Ran before me or like flakes of living snow
Fell below—
Every crystal that on earth is known,
Every flower or wild or garden grown,
In similitude seemed there.
But O more strange and more magnificently fair—
Longed I to gather
These flower worlds—but rather
Some repulsion drove me from them;
And I saw a storm o'ercome them;
Storm within them and without,
Hideous battle, ruin, rout;
Fire consumed them fever fast,
They were scattered by a blast;
And before me fell
Curtains impalpable:
Darkness and silence were only around me,
Peace fell upon me—the Infinite found me.
I was happy—sad,
Once more reverie mad:—
Slowly then a stir arose and after
Faint came the voices of infantile laughter;
Gradually I recognized
Voices that my soul had prized,
Voices of girl familiars—friends long gone,
Poets and sages but by instinct known—
And most of all one thrilling cry
Of mother ecstasy!
Then as that heart world must have throbbed to sight,
I was withdrawn in sudden flight,
And once more found me here,
Uprisen by this bier—

JOYEUX.

Shut out the stars; curtain those chambers, where
They have their birth; close out the outer air;
Banish the near appeal of things of earth!
Here is our world—here our home-keeping hearth!
Though but my guest—I know not for what space—
Though but the empty phantom of a face—
We will make joy—remember—talk—carouse.
Here sit you throned in your own royal house,
While I go bring you tribute.

ROSALYS.

What will you do—
Joyeux! Yet but happy be—I am too—

JOYEUX.

He goes to a table at the door and brings back the casket of jewels.

Here at your feet I pour a glittering rain,
Jewels of every kind and every stain;
They should have honored and adorned you. Yet
They're yours, though you can wear no coronet.

ROSALYS.

Still in me stirs enough of womanhood
To feel their beauty. Still some touch of blood
Thrills to the flattery of a gift so fair.

(Joyeux fetches flowers from a stand beside the bier.)

JOYEUX.

These have no uses for your sister there.
Take roses—Take the queens of hue and scent;
Take lilies whose pure blooms can best present

The soul that once you shrined and now you are;
Take the white daisy with its crimson star;
The cardinal flower; the pansy speckled deep;
Geranium and rosemary:—These keep,
Best of all things that strew our mortal way,
Remembrance of the resurrection day,
And so are fit to make a carpet here,
For the footfall of your spirit.

ROSALYS.

Dear, O dear
Are these memorial frailties of the past—

JOYEUX.

Now for the banquet of our souls at last

(Brings forward a table laden with fruits and wines.)

Here is the richest foison of the earth;—
Fruits wherewith Ceres still the second birth
Of her daughter celebrates. Peaches that have
Blushes like some girl's cheek whereon does wave
Love's flag; and apricots of purple gloom;
Grapes on whose convex rests unbrushed the bloom;
Gold globed oranges. O spirit bright
Sit throned at my feast while opposite
I say a grace for all these gifts to man.

ROSALYS.

This is but play, Joyeux—yet if play can
Lighten your weary heart—play on—play on!

JOYEUX.

Now let wine add its joyous benison—
Look you I set this crusted bottle ope,
And the hoarded heart of all some sunny slope

Gushes its torrent. I fill for you and me—
Stoop thou and kiss the goblet's brim. O see!
As your shadow falls upon each mantling cup
How gladly and how bright they bubble up—
I touch my glass with yours in merry clink
Joy and long life and married bliss I drink!

ROSALYS.

Thou art drawn to madness! Can this wine and fare
Make me a thing substantial out of air—
Awake thy reason! Think and not forget!

JOYEUX.

Do thou but aid me, I will win you yet.
We are together! Your eyes, your voice are real
The certain treasures of the true ideal—
Frown thou no doubts—Yet for these things of sense
They can not help me to the heights intense.
Lo, at your feet I fling, and as a book
I read your face 'till every fleeting look
Rises, a memory from the past, that shall
Subject the present hour to be its thrall.

ROSALYS.

What readest thou? On what page?

JOYEUX.

Chapter the first,
Picture and verse—Thou standest, half immersed,
In thy porch's darkness—and as up I ride
I know you for my doom determined bride.

ROSALYS.

Well, and what next?

JOYEUX.

Why, now, I see us two
Ride in the morning woodland o'er the dew.
The blossomed branches brush our faces, break
And shower down scents as though the trees would make
Themselves the heralds of our wedding feast,
For which some bronze cloaked oak would be the priest,
And give us a new license to caress—

ROSALYS.

Thy pictures draw me back to mortal. Yes
More, tell me more.

JOYEUX.

Moonlight in this report:
By the great fountain in the garden court
I see thee rise, slim, tyrannous, cold, white,
Like the fountain's shaft itself, transparent quite—
Yet but in seeming—I catch you in my arms
And the cold Naiad of a sudden warms;—
But with malicious heart, the water you
Scoop in both hands and drench me through and through—

ROSALYS.

What, are these memories in your bosom borne
I thought them buried but in mine—go on!

JOYEUX.

I see the vision of a lofty hall,
Blazoned about with shields armorial,
And filled with lamps in cresset row that shine
Above the beauty of your face divine:
And loyal friends to touch your finger tips

Throng there, and gracious greetings from your lips
Fall cadenced on the music freighted air—
And now the dance is on and noble shapes
Enact its rapturous captures and escapes.
O love thou drawest me to my feet! I rise!
Have I misread the meaning of your eyes?
A boon—a boon—Let us one measure tread
To the remembered music that is fled.

ROSALYS.

All my being seems to rouse;
Once again I am your spouse;
Earth's enchantment is upon me;
Thou once more hast wooed and won me;
To your look I burn and sway,
Speak your will and I obey.

JOYEUX.

Hark, that sound in surges rolled,
March and minuet of old.
Take thy place O partner mine,
Weave with me the rich design!

(They dance.)

ROSALYS.

Face to face, we move and meet!

JOYEUX.

Slow advance and slow retreat!

ROSALYS.

Now I greet thee; courtsey low!

JOYEUX.

Now unto your hand I bow!

ROSALYS.

Be my hand surrendered to thee!

JOYEUX.

Homage, homage now I do thee
So, in circle moving round!

ROSALYS.

Now we part and take new ground!

JOYEUX.

Now the triumph swells in air
Blows the trumpet's wild fanfare.
And we meet and side by side,
March together deified.
Man and wife who may not sever;
New united and forever;
Breathing but one vital breath,
Conquerors over life and death;
Let the worlds unto us doff!

ROSALYS.

O enough! enough! enough!

JOYEUX.

Thou dost wane and thou dost fail!
All the visionary pale
Cloud encurdled to present
Thy etherial element
Flickers, dims and dies away.

ROSALYS.

And the force that did me sway
Falters with the form that fades;
Myself from myself evades;
I am drawn, am borne above!
O my love, my love, my love!
Farewell, farewell and again.
Silence now is 'twixt us twain.

JOYEUX.

Go not! Go not! I adjure thee!
Stay, O stay! Must death immure thee,
Twice behind his dusky pall?
All my soul on thine does call,
On my knee I make my prayer,
To thee glimmering still in air.
Listen, listen. Thou hast found me
Devils in me and around me!
Linger yet and purge my soul,
Tell me of the dreamed goal:
Joying in thee, new begot,
I the future have forgot.
Tell me yet how I may come
At the last unto thy home.

ROSALYS.

Vain—'tis vain! I must depart,
O farewell my more than heart!

(Rosalys vanishes.)

JOYEUX.

Gone! The air is vacant, dumb.
Nothingness is nature's sum—
And I, all perplexed can
Nor rise to God nor sink to man—
She who might have been my guide,

I to-night have vexed and tried.
Yet her eyes mysterious have
Changed me from Folly's slave—
What must I do then. O, still here
Lies her cast shadow on the bier,
The white remnant of that thing
Vivid in emblazoning,
Only now—This stays—but she
Enters where I have no key.
Ah! Have I not—Between the two
Can I stand doubtful what to do?
Farewell thou former home of bliss,
Thou tenement of Rosalys.
I leave thee and I follow her—
Still does her track these spaces stir,
And I may overtake her—So
Ends all—begins all—with one blow.

Joyeux stabs himself to the heart with a dagger and falls forward over the bier. The room darkens and disappears. Then as visibility is restored, there is disclosed an elevated rocky platform, reached by rude steps and backed by the starry sky. On the highest part of the platform is seated an Angel and lower down stands Lucifer. Between them are the embraced figures of Joyeux and Rosalys.

ANGEL.

The judgment! Come, the judgment! I am ready!

LUCIFER.

Insolent intruder from the Infinite,
Wan, watery presence—the rumor of a dream,
Weak and unweaponed dost thou dare to come
Between me and my prey! Who and what art thou?

ANGEL.

I am one commissioned by thy King and mine

LUCIFER.

My King! I have none. If rival—where is He?
Ever an opponent I have sought, but still
Orbed in Oblivion He eludes me—fears
To meet the flaming onset of my wrath—

ANGEL.

Thou liest! Deep in thy mind thou knowest the truth

LUCIFER.

I do not know. I only know myself—
I am Dominion, Potency and Life!
From me springs forth yon stars and all they bear!
I am Action, Change—the ruling, ordering Will!

ANGEL.

And dost thou never know defeat or check?

LUCIFER.

I am too powerful to palter lies,
Too proud not to be frank. Aye there is something
In the sphere of the soul of man, I cannot govern
A perturbation that I do not cause.
And when the kiss of Death is on his lips,
And the sole monad that does rule the rest
Of his material elements, steps forth,
Thy frosty shadow fall athwart my path,
Thou takest him by the hand and leadst him, where
I cannot follow—to some unplaced place
Out of my influence. O thou dost me wrong;
Thou robbest me of the fuel for my fires;
Gradually withdrawing my most potent forces
In ebb of empire from me.

ANGEL.

Can'st define
Thy Being? Whence thou comest can'st disclose?

LUCIFER.

Before me nothing was. If anything
The absolute abyss—the vast—the void,
Unlimited, without or law or life—
I woke! Delightedly I thrilled through all,
A myriad of motions—vibrations variable.
Dancing and rioting—a mob of joys,
Drawn to one centre to embrace and wed—
At the same moment woke repulsion—strife—
War was the birthright of my whirl of worlds.
Light from the motions of the mass was struck
And change was its condition—Gradually
I drew my realms to form—to altering forms,
Never the same but growing still in glory
As they condensed—From faintest clouds—from dim
Abysmal apparitions, still they grew
To spiral rings—ellipses, circles, discs
Of mingled darkness, dusk and fiery day,
To shields embossed with awful heraldries,
Crests, plumes, great fans of flame and tasseled curtains,
Semblances of things that should created be,
Afterward in miniature—men, animals,
And threatening phantoms. Then as vivid more
And still more vital grew my vast designs,
Twin, triple, multiple spheres, were islanded
Amid the others—such as men could know
And naming make the regents of the sky,
Sirius, Canopus—Vega, Betelgeuse
Altair and Regulus and Procyon—
Then as the flames of the vast hearths of heaven
Still blazed, at distance from them I flung out
Dull orbs, like vases, wherein were collected
The precious ashes of the burning spheres.
Moist clouds and carbon vapors there conveyed

The seeds of life—Seas rolled there, forests rose
Like clouds of green under the clouds of azure,
In cool and colonnaded depths—and there
As my last miracle I planted man,
Instinct with all the fires of all the stars,
Compact of all the forces that had made,
The flame walled universe which is his home,
A warrior from his birth, a child of change,
A mummer and a mask even to himself.
And there I throned me as the Lord of life,
Patron of man's proud race predominant:
I crowned myself with flowers and grapes—as king
Of the light that moves the sap in them and pours
Passion and inspiration in the vine,
That waves the bearded grasses—makes the tree
Heal up the last year's wound with this year's wood:
I made myself the God of Music—rang
Through all the echoing arches of the earth,
'Till the bronze round of men with glancing feet,
And women with silver orbed bosoms, fled
About me, intricately to imitate
The rapturous rhythm of yon starry rings:
Or I drew the labor of a tide of men
To some eternal architecture—or else
Scattered them in migrations, voyagings
Restless over the earth. But most, O most,
War made I the sole symbol of my rule,
And Death—the signal of my changes. Such
Is my creation—What can He do thou servest
Either to equal it or emulate?

ANGEL.

Create, create and ever compass nothings;
Escape, escape—yet still to other prisons;
Be free and glorious that art bound and dark;
Plunge with thy wings outspread to nethermost space;
Climb with pulsating pinions still more high;
Blazon the pictures of thy suns abroad;
Thy comets with their bubbles backward blown;

Thy vortexes of ether—whorls of worlds;
Thy solitary sentinelling stars;
And the great camp of all thy hosts, that stretches
Illimitable, aye unimaginable;—
Yet learn thy definition is but death,
These are but seeming and thyself a dream!
Thy Space is but the thought of God—thy Time
The permit of His nod—thy Strife His means
To raise the nobler children of His hope,
The intelligences and the ample souls,
That do thy worlds inhabit—to His heights
To consciousness—to knowledge of His ends.
The rest is but illusion—Thy effort is
But the dark groundwork, dregs, remainder stuff,
The poor, the frail, the patchwork scaffolding,
Of His etherial, spiritual design;
And all thy matter, caught in countless worlds,
With intercourse and interacting forces,
With flashing lights that pilot to mislead,
Embraces and repulsions—all shall be
But as Autumn leaves that belt the earth,
When the wind rises and rushes and strews them down,
Or as the frost upon the morning pane
Where beats the sunlight—I shall see thee go
With all thy kindred powers in utter rout,
With bloody banners trailing through the sky,
Ruined, with rent ranks, falling here in heaps
There straggling singly, dwindling ever down,
To cold, to death, to silence, to decay,
To the last endless and oblivious grave.

LUCIFER.

Thou mightst appall me could I apprehend thee
Thy words have little meaning to my ear.
I am existence—I am domination.
Endlessly I destroy and I uprear—
Blot me out and thy God has nothing left,
Nor souls to guide—nor place to exercise them.

ANGEL.

Thou art the arrow speeding on its way,
But not the bow or target. Thou art the Will,
Sprung from the Idea—to the Idea bound,
And with the purpose of thy act accomplished
Into the ether thou wilt fade forgotten.

LUCIFER.

The purpose! Name it! I believe thee not.

ANGEL.

List to the cause for which thou wast evoked,
List to the sequel of thy cyclic wars;
List to the reason for thy exorcisement!
Out of thy Strife rises a nobler Peace,
Out of the ashes of thy fires upsprings,
A race of beings—souls of such a sort
Heroic, exercised in valor, virtue,
Fit to be hailed the final seed of God;
Sons that can know Him and be known by Him;
This is the fruit then of thy great creation.

LUCIFER.

Wilt thou persuade me I am but the tool
And not the master builder—only the means
Gone to the making of a thing I know not
It is not so. The virtue that thou praisest
Comes from collisions of my vital sparks.
What then are men. Beasts that but walk erect,
Rocks veined with fire or waters firmly moulded.
Nature is all and I am Nature's King.

ANGEL.

Proud fool! Though sprung from beasts or earth or water,
When the soul woke in man he was created,
Lord of an instinct where thou hadst no share,

And reason and imagination in him
Reacted on thy palpable, gross visions,
And in the sunset put a holy gleam,
And made a halo of thy films of stars,
And haunted him with dreams of other homes.

LUCIFER.

What wilt thou do with him whom I have made
Or at least half made? He is a thing of action
And action must have opportunity;—
I am the gateway to the world of deeds!
Wilt lead him to thy courts of emptiness,
And galleries of contemplative silence?
What can exist where nothing can be done?

ANGEL.

Thou can'st not 'scape the circle of thyself.
To thee the Unknown is the Impossible.
Yet still it lives—yet still the Ideal lives,
Before thee and beyond thee. In it, in it
The inexplicable charm, the perfect grace,
The something ever wanting in the world,
And the lost cadence are restored at last.
Dost think the souls that front the Deity,
And feel the benediction of his eyes,
Can lack for joy—There only and then first,
Are the love torches lighted in their hearts;
And to their eternal partners do they turn
In rapturous revelation—and their marriage
Flames like one pulse of lightning throughout heaven.
Full heirs of God, while still their Father is,
They do present His inexhaustible power,
And are Himself divided from Himself.
Then for employment—He can make new Spaces,
Where He may set those spirits he has proved,
In several stations each to exercise him
With infinite new creations—Or, more easy,
What need to act at all when thought outdoes,
All doing—so that each once mortal being,

Can in succession swift, build or destroy
Fabrics that rival thy designs! Aye, bring,
Thee or thy like before him, and so placed
As at a theatre behold thee play,
And struggle in thy all unconscious bondage.
Spirit of transient life—Spirit of Evil
Fain would I disenchant thee of thy pride,
And make admitted ignorance bow thee down!
But no! Thou art determined for an end—
Enough! Enough! The trial and the judgment—

LUCIFER.

I admit but what I must:
O'er the creatures of my dust,
Thou a power mysterious hast
To take them from me or to cast
Their dim sparks of being back
To my forge and fiery rack.
But these spirits are mine own;
I do reign in them alone.

ANGEL.

Art thou sure? Joyeux, appear!

JOYEUX.

Mighty Angel, I am here.

ANGEL.

Forth Accuser—Now thy hour
Make thy plea and mark thy power!

LUCIFER.

But for that I do not choose
Idly throw the dice to lose
I'd be silent. My report
Old, reiterate and short,

Is:—This Being over bold
Spurned my glories manifold;
Rebel against life and sense
Sought to know Omnipotence;
Struggled always—always fell
Other were a miracle,
Deeper, farther fell than those
My true servants and thy foes.
Proof! Behold upon his breast
The gaping wound that tells the rest.

ANGEL.

Spirit unfortunate, that hath
Ta'en the proud, imperious path
To the eyrie of the Soul;—
Who with blast and trumpet roll
Comes to woo the calm of Love,
Thy doom hovers yet above:
Speak! and halt it if thou may'st.

JOYEUX.

A wild figure in a waste
That is man—Before, behind,
Path nor goal nor guide defined.
Flowers and fruits and friends delay him,
Stars, mislead him—signs betray him.
Yet 'gainst God I argue not,
He has written—we but blot.
Well I know in every soul
Is the clue to thrid the whole.
Something in us speaks of Duty,
Is recognizant of Beauty:
If we look and listen well
Never fails the oracle.
Amplly, nobly in me born
Were the Angels of the morn:
Rather failed I from excess
Than for any emptiness:
Rash and reckless did I try

To compel them to comply;
Worshipped God with Devil's clangor,
Stormed the courts of Love with anger.
Well, 'tis done. The doom is just,
Be it what it may or must—
Yet because I have not lied,
Nor surrendered my soul's pride
To this Fool of fiery dust,
To his lures of gold or lust,
Still I strive and still I hope
I may live and heaven may ope.

ANGEL.

Thou shalt live, but not to-day:
Thou the trial must essay
Once again—the ocean oar
Once again to reach the shore.
This my sentence—Thou must go
Back into the ceaseless flow:
Fiery dust and starry stir
Must try again your character,
'Till freed and perfect thou mayst be
Immortal in eternity.

LUCIFER.

I foresee there'll be no end.
Your hand Joyeux—for we—descend—

ANGEL.

Halt! Another fate than his
Waits. Rise up O Rosalys!

LUCIFER.

As the satellite must go
Where its orb whirls to and fro,

She must follow, follow, follow
On her master's track below,
And resign your mansions hollow
Rescued unto joy and woe.

ANGEL.

Nay—not so—A thing of Love,
She consorts with the crowned above.
Nothing that she is belongs
To your sense polluted throngs.

ROSALYS.

Mighty Angel—just—all seeing
Emblem of the only being,
Thou can'st look into my heart,
Needs no eloquence or art.
I no better crave or ask
Than the old, long used task,
Following still with faithful feet
His I love in his defeat.
Though he be but sorrow tossed,
Swayed by stars or strayed or lost,
Though his doom be more malign
Than all devils can design,
With him I am placed yet,
With him I must rise or set;
At his worst he wants me most,
At his best I am his boast;
How can I be other—more
Than the being I adore,
Thou, who emanation art
Of the All-embracing Heart;—
For a brief, immortal space
The threshold of thy dwelling place
I approached—uplift, upcaught,
Every feeling—every thought!
Figures there my eyes have seen

Glowing through the final screen;
Thrilled and fainting there I felt
My ecstatic being melt
Into bliss so high and pure,
Seemed I could not long endure:
There my wish and there my hope
Would with him I love have scope.
But alone! O no! Forgive
As a woman I must live.
To remember would be grief,
But to forget were past relief.
Think then that the flaw of earth,
Or a hopeless spirit dearth,
Is in me! Avert your face!
Outcast from your dwelling place
I your word may not obey!
Fallen with my love for aye.

ANGEL.

Child thou wakest the earnest smile!
Ruin is won not with such wile:
Never yet Love's rebel fell,
Or stained the incorruptible.
Rise thou must and must advance,
Throned over change and chance;
And thy lover must sink far
Subject to every evil star:
Yet as his body servile is
To such disordered influences,
Thy guiding spirit may exert
Power to heal their every hurt;
Thou shalt draw and make him come
At last to thy endless home.
A moment unto thee shall be
His world wandering errantry:
He shall find you in that place
Warm yet with his last embrace.
Now thy parting speech be made
Ere I separate shade from shade—

JOYEUX.

O high hearted this farewell,
Higher than all stories tell!
She who erst in earliest pride
Came a blushing fronted bride
To my arms, would take upon her
All my doom and my dishonor!
Glad I am it may not be,
Glad O Love thou risest free,—
Let the old heroic mood
Of the women of thy blood,
Blaze within thee. Step thou forth
Counting honor only worth;
Let no timid fear come o'er thee,
Arm me for the fight before me:
Be the look within thy eyes
Signal unto high emprise:
Let they flushed, impassioned face
Glow the goal of my new race:
Soon, perchance, the strife shall end
And our souls together blend—

ROSALYS.

I am weak! I cannot say
Go! O God, and what are they
That have power to thrust apart
Soul from soul and heart from heart?

JOYEUX.

Look up—Be brave—Be comforted
Weep not! Pray for me instead.
No more regret or doubt or fear
But resolved ardor clear
Be in the spirits of us both,
And the true, eternal troth!
I go—Lead on O Lucifer—
The end shall bring me back to her.

ROSALYS.

Joyeux, Joyeux, alas, look back!
Phantoms haunt thy downward track.
Look! Fain would I seal thine eyes
Against Love's newer forgeries
Fain my soul on them impress
Though I should fade to nothingness.

JOYEUX.

Fear not! Doubt not! I shall come
Ransomed to our final home

ROSALYS.

Then I care not for the rest
I'll be brave, if that be best—

JOYEUX.

So thou makest my heart rejoice.
Victory shall hear thy voice.

ROSALYS.

Yet thy feet must tread far hells!

JOYEUX.

They shall climb to heaven's bound!

ROSALYS.

Faint and far our wedding bells!

JOYEUX.

Hark! but yet they sound, they sound!

END.

GHOST OF ROSALYS

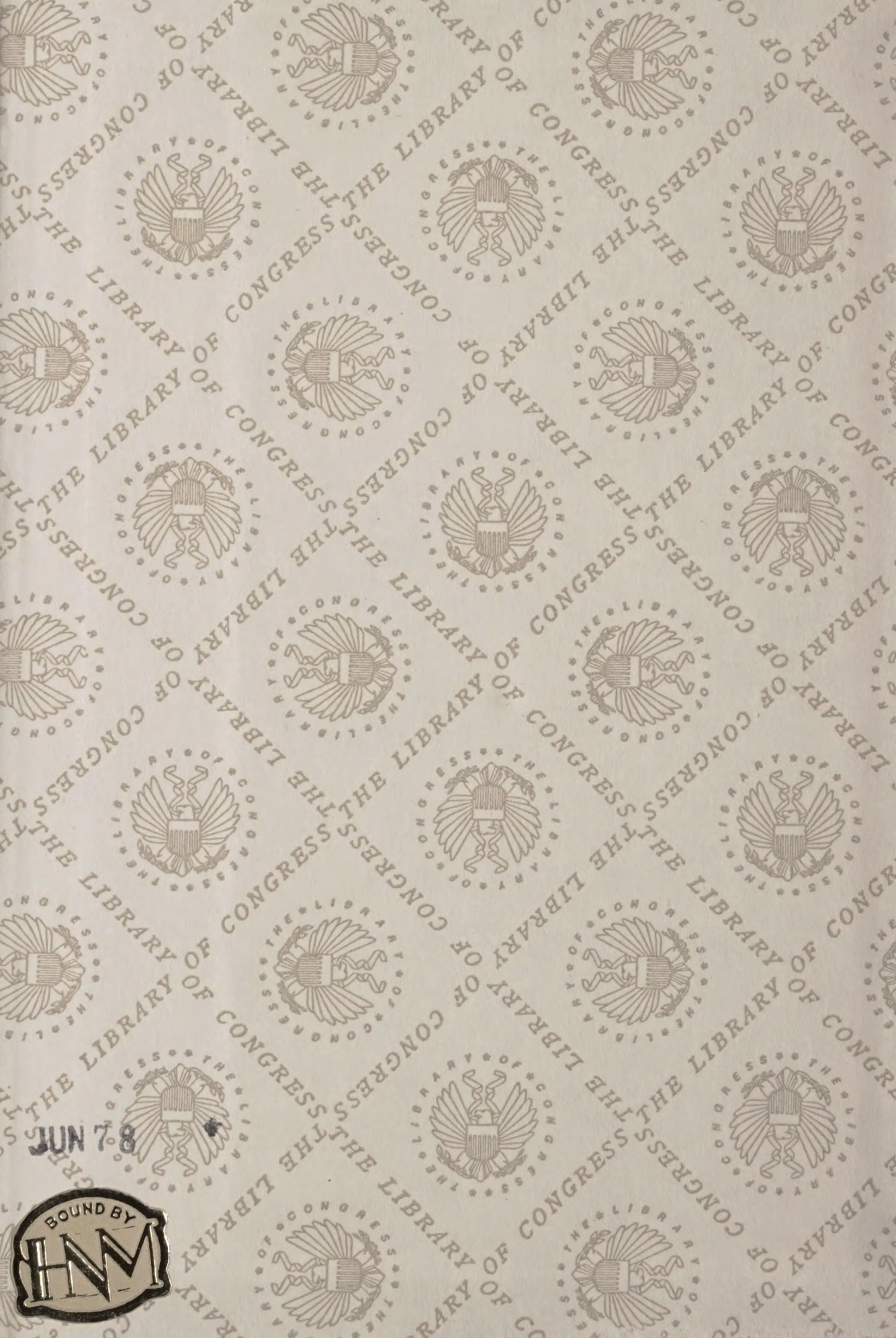
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